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SOMETHING has happened in a world which had grown cynical about the possibility of anything happening. For President Hoover's disarmament proposals are an event comparable only with President Wilson's insistence that a League of Nations should form part of the Treaty Settlement after the war. Then, as now, every militarist, every vested interest in war, and every-old fashioned nationalist, proceeded to find reasons for rejecting a scheme which might perhaps save the world from a repetition of 1914-18. Until President Hoover's intervention everyone believed the Disarmament Conference to all intents and purposes dead. It may now come to life. It will only do so if the obstructionists are not allowed once more to envelop the real issue in a new cloud of technical obfuscations. At the moment they are at a disadvantage, for President Hoover's proposals were a complete surprise to everyone.

* * *

President Hoover's plea is roughly for a reduction of all armaments by one-third. It covers land, sea and air armaments. It means that President Hoover has overruled the obstruction of his own experts and that he demands that other Governments do the same. There will, of course, be details to thrash out; but is there a single reputable reason why his proposals should not be at once and unreservedly accepted? Everyone knows that there is no reputable reason, though there are plenty of disreputable ones. If such a reduction is carried out it will be possible for the first time to take seriously the French proposal for internationalising arms. And what reception was accorded to these proposals? A whole-hearted acceptance by Italy, Germany and Russia; a blank reiteration of the old security stuff from France; and a speech of welcome from Sir John Simon which threw a good deal of lukewarm water as well as the correct bouquets at the proposal. Let those who believe in the possibility of disarmament and world peace make no mistake: Mr. Hoover's lead will only have results if there is a popular agitation behind it strong enough to defeat the immense forces which work openly and in secret for the retention of the old Europe and the old military rivalries of states.

The quarrel between the German States and the Reich over the Brown Army may mean serious trouble. A number of the States, led by Bavaria, Baden and Württemberg, have refused to obey the decree of the Papen Government which removes the ban on the wearing of uniforms, and at Munich the uniformed Nazis were turned out of the Diet and the sitting suspended. A conference in Berlin on Wednesday produced no result. The Ministers of the Southern States maintain their defiance, and insist that they are acting constitutionally in exercising their police functions. They have now gone home to consider whether they can "adjust their laws to the policy of the Reich." Meanwhile there are widespread disorders, rioting and street fights between Nazis and Communists, and it looks as if this will continue, whether the ban on the Brown Army is lifted or not. There looms behind also the prospect of national disruption—a prospect which will be viewed with dismay by everyone, except perhaps the French nationalists. But the forces of sanity should be strong enough to prevent such a catastrophe as the Balkanisation of Germany.

* * *

The Lothian Franchise Committee having reported, along with the Committee on Federal Finance, it is understood that the Government is ready to go straight forward with the shaping of the All-India federal constitution. But it is not much good talking about a constitution unless practicable means have been found of consulting Indian opinion and of gaining the co-operation of the Indian leaders. A special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, discussing the subject with exceptional knowledge, argues that the plan of creating an Indian Constituent Assembly for the purpose of debating and deciding upon the Government's draft scheme could not be anything but vexatious and futile, since unanimity could not be attained and the Princes and Moslems would refuse to be bound by majority votes. Then there is the question of consulting the National Congress. The Left wing does not and would not co-operate, and the fact has to be faced that this year's method of ruling India by penal ordinances and the police has made an end of the Congress Right wing, destroyed the moderate element, and made Indian society as a whole deeply disgusted with the British Raj. How, then, is the procedure of conference to be resumed? There can be no settlement in India so long as the Congress is merely a proscribed body with every one of its prominent members in gaol. The Constitution committees have shown good speed in getting through their work, and no doubt the Government must get on with the work of drafting. But the first imperative necessity is to create the machinery for ending the deadlock and changing the atmosphere in India.

* * *

The Chilean revolution, it seems, must be spoken of in the plural and not the singular. One Junta follows another with bewildering rapidity. When we wrote last week Señor Davila, the "Pink," was out and Colonel Grove, the "Red," was in. Now Davila is back, but again seriously threatened by the Left wing supporters of the expatriated Grove. Martial law is in force, and a proscription of Communists and other subverters of the peace has been issued. Street fighting is going on in the towns, and strikes have spread rapidly among the railway and tram workers, the miners and the bakers. Whether the present Government, none too sure of the loyalty of its armed forces, inspired by "moderate" Socialist principles, and tender to the interests of foreign capital, can ride out this storm, we do not know. It is pretty clear that the arrest or expulsion of "alien agitators" and Communist leaders will not settle the business. And it is not at all clear what positive measures Señor Davila can take to remedy the widespread popular discontents. The only information we have on this head is a report that he has invited several distinguished European economists, including Herr Werner Sombart and Signor Afredo Pareto, to go out and advise on the plans of the New Jerusalem. It would be an intriguing experiment; but somehow we do not expect it to come off.

* * *

The American Federation of Labour, in its latest estimate just made public, puts the volume of unemployment in the United States at over ten and a half millions. Nor is this likely to be an over-estimate. According to the official figures measuring the numbers of workers in employment, there has been a fall of over forty per cent. in the volume of employment in industry since 1926. The total may well be substantially larger even than the A.F. of L. makes out, since it is certain that the contraction in earnings has been greater still, owing to the immense numbers who are on part time work as well as to the heavy reductions in wage-rates, especially in the less organised trades. Nor is there, even to-day, any sign of the American slump touching bottom, despite the attempts at reflation made recently by the Federal Reserve Bank. We observe that the platform of the Republican Party contemplates an attempt to cure this situation by raising the American tariff wall higher still for both agricultural and industrial products, and thus pushing the country yet another step towards economic isolation. But there will be powerful forces ranged against this policy, even if it proves possible to devise a tariff that will satisfy both the agrarian and the manufacturing interests. The drain of gold from America has now ceased for the time, and the Senate's rejection of the Bonus Bill has heartened the orthodox. But reflation has not so far proceeded far enough to produce any noticeable effect; and the effects, as well as the volume, of unemployment grow worse day by day. The outlook for next winter is bleak indeed for the American people.

* * *

The Dutch and Belgian Governments have this week initialled a commercial agreement, which is almost certain to be ratified, for the drastic mutual reduction of tariffs. Under this agreement, to which Luxemburg is also a party, the existing duties are to be reduced by ten per cent. per annum. The plan is apparently meant to run for at least five years, so as to halve the existing rates. The Scandinavian countries also took part in the negotiations which led up to this agreement, and might very likely have been parties to it but for their uncertainty about British tariff policy and their fears of exclusion from the British market. The

agreement, however, remains open for them to sign at a later stage, if they change their minds. The reductions in duties will, of course, apply only to the signatory countries, which will also undertake to impose no fresh duties or restrictions on one another's goods. This discrimination will raise yet again the question of the "most favoured nation clause" in existing commercial treaties. But it seems most unlikely that this successful initiative in reducing duties, based on the recommendations of the League of Nations, can be seriously obstructed by other nations, which claim the full benefit of most favoured nation treatment while refusing to reduce their own duties. The new agreement is rather in the nature of a partial Customs Union than of an ordinary lowering of tariff rates—a clear indication of the way the wind of commercial policy is now beginning to blow in Europe.

* * *

The trade figures for May and for the first five months of the present year make astonishing reading. British imports for May are down by nearly 20 per cent. on those of a year ago, and imports of manufactures by no less than 45 per cent. in value. Exports are down by nearly 13 per cent., and exports of manufactures by 11 per cent. The so-called "trade balance" has thus been very greatly "improved," the total excess of exports over imports having fallen by 13 per cent. This will doubtless be claimed by some people as a magnificent step towards the stimulation of home employment, and as a clear sign that it is possible to cut down imports without a proportionate fall in exports. Of course it is possible, if at the same time there occurs, owing to the cessation of dividends, interest, reparations and other payments due from abroad, a large reduction in the volume of foreign goods which we are entitled to receive without sending out exports in return. Our "adverse balance" has fallen mainly because our financial receipts from abroad have fallen off. But it by no means follows that we are producing at home the goods we used to buy overseas. It is far more likely that most of them are not being produced at all. And certainly the effect of this fall in our imports has been to add to the adversity of our suppliers, and made it harder for them to pay us their debts. So we end up in a vicious circle of declining trade, declining dividends, and above all else declining to face the real facts of the world trade position.

* * *

According to our national habit of regarding all artistic pursuits as the whimsical luxuries of amateurs we stand alone among civilised nations in possessing no University Institute for the study of the history of art. And yet we have in this country a very respectable artistic inheritance and not a few people who think that art matters. Some of these—Mr. Samuel Courtauld, Sir Joseph Duveen and Sir Robert Witt in particular—have now made it possible for the University of London to set up an Institute of Art. Until the Institute buildings are completed on the Bloomsbury site, its work will be concentrated in the miraculous house at 20 Portman Square which Mr. Courtauld has presented for the purpose. We say miraculous because it is something of a miracle to have available for people who wish to study art the finest example of the work of Robert Adam, to have the great gilded rooms perfectly furnished and on their walls many of the best Manets, Monets, Cézannes and Renoirs. Students who wish to take an honours degree in the history of art can begin work in these surroundings next October, and later, when the Bloomsbury building is ready, 20 Portman Square will be available for the use of the more advanced students and as a centre for the artistic department of the University. Sir Robert Witt has promised to bequeath his famous library, and Lord Lee his great collection of pictures—which means that everything will be complete when a generous donor also provides £20,000 for the scientific and chemical side of art criticism.

* * *

An Irish correspondent writes: This week we have a respite from politics. Prelates who have attended Eucharistic Congresses in many cities are astounded at the enthusiasm and devotion shown here. Last week during religious retreats for men there was hardly standing room in any church in the country. People of all religions have co-operated in the lighting and decoration of Dublin. The areas on the south side where nearly half the population is Jewish are amongst the most gay. The Union Jack is among the flags at Dunleary (Kingstown), but it was taken down from over the Shelbourne Hotel at the order of an "officer" of the so-called Irish Republican Army. The incident is an example of the "atmosphere" created by the new Government, but it must not be forgotten that there is no place where English visitors are more popular than in Ireland. In the eyes of the common people here the Union Jack is not the emblem of Great Britain but rather the standard beneath which a "loyalist" minority exploited their fellow-countrymen. How far that minority itself has been changed by its experience of Government under the Treaty may be judged from the fact that Trinity College is lighted and beflagged for the Eucharistic Congress. Beneath our rejoicings there is an undercurrent of apprehension—an uneasy feeling that having voted for prosperity and security we are, through our own fault, getting farther away from both. Mr. De Valera's recent declarations make it clearer than ever that the Oath is but a small part of our troubles. He takes a piece of chalk, works out certain figures on a blackboard, and turns proudly to his class to announce the answer. But the problem between Ireland and England cannot be worked out so simply. We are back to the old idea of external association—first, an all-Ireland Republic, then a treaty of association with, perhaps, recognition of the King. The majority would rather work the other way, towards the kingdom of Ireland through the Dominion of the Irish Free State. And there are some who think that unity with the six counties in present industrial conditions would be anything but a blessing. The Free State economy based on agriculture may prove better able to withstand the world blizzard without having to include a city like Belfast. Mr. de Valera will find many to agree with him that any arbitration Tribunal to be appointed should not be confined to citizens of the British Empire. Our history and even our comparatively recent experience of a Boundary Commission make us suspicious.

THE DIRTY SLATE

THE Lausanne Conference opened, as all the two or three dozen similar gatherings in the past twelve years have opened, with solemn warnings and equally solemn professions of goodwill. Mr. MacDonald painted the state of the world in grim colours; Herr von Papen added the special touches of black for Germany. No one disputed the truth of the picture, and the five principal Powers—France, Great Britain, Italy, Belgium and Japan—issued a joint declaration that they meant business. They pledged themselves to seek "a final and definite solution . . . without delay or interruption," and they agreed that while the Conference was engaged in that search, there should be no question of resuming the payments suspended by the Hoover moratorium. This was promising, and still more promising was Mr. Chamberlain's demand that the slate should be wiped clean. But then came M. Herriot with ladlefuls of powder to put in the jam. We must go cautiously. Germany had made herself into a formidable economic power, and despite her present difficulties, she would presently become prosperous again. French claims could not be lightly abandoned, and the blessed ideal of "security" must be established before reparations could be cancelled. In plain words, France still stands for the dirty slate.

This was what we had expected. M. Herriot is a weak man, pulled between Right and Left, between nationalism and internationalism, compromising with his convictions, willing to do something but uncertain what that something should be. He has no plan, he says; the Conference must produce one, and then he will see about it. Meanwhile the French nationalists are inciting him against the one and only plan which will be worth the paper it is written on. They attacked him for giving away too much at the start. Why should he have committed France to a "definite and final solution" of the problem? If this meant—as it would be taken by everybody to mean—a cancelling of reparations, France would be in danger of isolation when she refused, as she must refuse, to consent to such a sacrifice. "Even though reparations are dead," cries one publicist in the Paris press, "we shall not give a certificate for their burial without getting something for it." As for what this price might be, there are numberless suggestions. Germany might be required to deliver railway bonds, or some other bonds. M. Briand's scheme for a European economic union and M. Tardieu's Danubian federation plan are put forward again as possible fields for concessions by Germany. Others propose that France should compensate herself as amply as possible out of the Saar. All this section of French opinion, in fact, is agreed on one thing. France cannot have her pound of flesh; but she shall at least have an ounce or two.

If M. Herriot is going to stick to this line, we see very little prospect of a successful outcome of the Conference. It is a mischievous toying with the problem. The French have a bare legal case; morally and economically they have none. Their war losses were undeniably heavy, but those have been fully repaired by the territory acquired under the Treaty of Versailles and the gold millions received from Germany. The difficulties of the inflation period were got over years ago; the American and British debts were funded on very favourable terms. Of late, though France is affected like all other countries by the world slump, she has increased her production of nearly every commodity, she has pushed herself into the front rank of financial powers, and has exploited her opportunities in this respect ruthlessly and disastrously to other people. She is, by the letter of the law, entitled to go on drawing reparation payments from Germany, which, after deducting her own war debt interest to the United States, would leave an enormous surplus in her own pocket. Of course, France will not get these payments from Germany under the Young Plan, and if she were still required to pay America, potential profit would be turned to actual and serious loss. But, that is not an argument of any weight. Nobody imagines that war debts will be paid if reparations are cancelled. France's attitude can be explained only on the assumption that she hopes still to make a net gain out of Germany and to keep Germany in chains. The first hope is illusory, and the second, if it could be fulfilled, would have to be fulfilled by some other method than a financial plan—some method that must lead to universal catastrophe.

There seemed at the outset but a poor chance of convincing M. Herriot and the reactionaries behind him in Paris that the game is up, that the French policy is not merely ruinous to other nations, but is useless to France herself. But the chances may be improved by the sudden intervention of the Americans. This intervention is ostensibly, it is true, concerned with the problem of Geneva and not of Lausanne. But the two problems are very obviously not in water-tight compartments and, despite the official statements from Washington, nobody believes that Mr. Gibson, in his talks with the British and French Prime Ministers, avoided all reference to the connection between disarmament and debt revision. The Americans have lost patience with the dilly-dallying at Geneva, and they remind us, as they have frequently reminded us before, that they will be little disposed to help in cleaning the dirty slate of debts and reparations, if Europe does nothing about the equally dirty slate of armaments. For ourselves, we are very glad to see their impatience, and we hope that they will keep up the pressure. Mr. Hoover's proposal of a 33 per cent. cut all round, if it were accepted, as it ought to be, would mean a resounding triumph at Geneva, and its effects could not fail to be felt at Lausanne. Of course, we cannot assume that the French will accept anything so drastic. Their nationalist Die-hards, indeed, are opposed to any reductions at all. But they are not France, and they are not even the French Government. Nor is M. Herriot, weak as he may be, the mere puppet of the General Staff. He ought at least to agree to a cut substantial enough to affect the American attitude to the revision of the war debts. Mr. Hoover, it is true, has not yet made any promises on that head, and he is not likely to for the moment. But it is pretty safe to assume that a real measure of disarmament in Europe will be the prelude to a cancellation of debts. The Americans are learning—the clear-sighted among them have realised long ago—that the prospects of getting their interest from Europe are not bright, and they will presently have to make a virtue of

necessity. But they will do that sooner and more cheerfully if they are assured that Europe is going to cut down the sums that it squanders on military purposes. And they are fully justified, as we think, in looking for this *quid pro quo*. It is now for M. Herriot to decide what he is going to do with the sponge and the two dirty slates.

THE "ECONOMY" STUNT

ECONOMY means not spending as little as possible, but getting good value for what is spent. An economical man will doubtless also be expected to live within his income, but he will not be expected to refrain from borrowing if he can put the loan to a use which promises to help him make both ends meet. He will exert himself to earn money, as well as to spend what he earns to the best advantage. We should not call a man economical if he spent his days in bed, and then prided himself on the savings he was able to achieve by eating less food and doing without a fire in his grate.

In relation to the individual, these truths are undisputed. But when people set to discussing "national economy" they are very apt to lose their heads. The taxpayer has a natural disposition to regard all money levied by the State in taxation merely as so much abstracted from his own income, without any consideration of its subsequent spending by the State. The less the State spends, the more, he is apt to argue, there will be for him to spend himself—or to save. It is not easy to get him to accept the view that the State may be able to spend the money more usefully—and also more productively—than he can; and it is no easier to get him to see that money saved is not the same thing as money productively applied. He urges, with some plausibility, that high taxation discourages private enterprise; and he cannot readily be brought to admit that the encouragement of public enterprise by State spending is an adequate offset, or even in itself a good thing.

This attitude has two effects. It causes, in the first place and most prominently, a demand for retrenchment in the social services. Up to a point this can be achieved by a Government which sets out to achieve it by purely administrative action, without recourse to legislation. For in most of the grant-aided services the policy of the central departments can make a good deal of difference to the sums which local authorities are able to draw from central funds. The "economies" achieved by these means will almost certainly be a mixture of good and bad. They will cause some "slack" to be taken up in the actual management of the services in question; but they will also inevitably cause the local authorities also to retrench upon forms of expenditure which it is desirable to maintain. There is always a danger that the local bodies, when they find their grants cut down, will begin slashing out indiscriminately at every form of expenditure, good or bad, that is under their control. During the crisis of last year quite a number of local councils passed merely absurd resolutions postponing *all* capital expenditure for a period of years, or cutting down estimates right and left without any regard to the effects of the limitations imposed. This policy naturally led to a considerable addition to the volume of unemployment, especially in the constructional trades, and thus partly offset the effects of our departure from the gold standard.

The limits of purely administrative "economy" are, however, soon reached, as far as the Central Government is concerned. Aware of this, the advocates of "economy" now want to go much farther. They are saying, as loudly as they dare, that in face of national impoverishment Great Britain will have to go back on the social policy of a whole generation, and undo a large part of the social legislation that has been carried since 1906. The attack is directed especially at education and at the insurance services, but housing also comes in for its share of the attack. In education the most clamant demands are for the raising of the school age at the wrong end, so as to shut out the younger children, and for a lowering of standards, especially in higher education. In the insurance services the cry is that benefits must be further reduced, and yet more discrimination applied. In housing it is urged that, despite the lessened ability of tenants to pay, we ought to let rents rise until the private builder again comes back into business over the entire field. And, finally, there is the usual outcry about the excessive personnel of the Civil Service, and a demand that public salaries shall be again cut down. One hundred million pounds has been mentioned as the sum-total of the economies to be aimed at; and £40,000,000, in the social services alone, has been put forward with apparent seriousness in a motion supported by a considerable number of the Government's supporters in Parliament.

There is, of course, a sense in which the Government *can* save £40,000,000 at the expense of the social services. It can bang the school doors in the face of the younger children; it can compel teachers to teach unmanageably large classes for less money than they are getting now, even after the cuts of last autumn. It can go back on all the plans of educational development that have come out of the Fisher Act and the Hadow Committee, stop school-building, let existing schools fall into disrepair, employ cheap unqualified teachers in place of those who have been trained, and save the cost of training, abolish public maintenance grants and scholarships, reduce unemployment benefit and supplement the "means test" by a "deservingness test" administered by people like Mr. Geoffrey Drage, stop all grants for housing, and cut down wages and salaries for all classes of public servants. It can do all these things, and do most of them amid the thunderous applause of a section of its own back-benchers. But the Government must know well enough that if it were to attempt to do a fraction of these things, its only safe seats would be in places such as Eastbourne and Cheltenham, and no mere majority in the House of Commons could save it from a speedy reckoning with an outraged public. The Government, of course, will not do what the *Daily Mail* says it wants. But it will probably go as far as it dares; and it will be stimulated to daring by the high proportion of idiots on its own back benches.

The social services, however, are not the only victims of the "economy" stunt. Trade and industry are also among the sufferers. It is plain enough that the money which the capital-owning classes save out of their incomes is not now being invested in industry, and that under present conditions any practicable remission of taxation would have almost no effect in stimulating investment. What money people do save they are far more intent to hoard away than to risk in any projects of industrial development. Investment has certainly fallen off a good deal more than saving in these bad times. This is not in the least surprising; for the prospects of industrial investment are admittedly far from attractive. But it points directly to the need for offering to the investor openings for his money which he will be more likely to accept—in other words, for the State to step in with schemes of economic development which will serve both to correct the deficiencies of private enterprise and to stimulate industrial demand. The advocates of "economy," however, will have none of this. Many of them take the view that public spending out of loans is almost as bad as higher taxation, and many more, aware that any scheme of public development will be likely to involve some spending out of taxes as well as out of loans, oppose any actual plan that is brought forward on grounds of national economy.

Accordingly, State policy reinforces, instead of correcting, the depression of private business. The more the advocates of "economy" have their way, the more this is bound to happen. The effect of cutting down the social services will be to diminish the purchasing power in the hands of the

general public, and this must serve still further to accentuate the tendency for prices to fall. Yet almost everybody, with the possible exception of a few pundits in the Treasury and the Bank of England, now admits the desirability of action to raise prices above the existing level, and indeed regards a rise in wholesale prices as an indispensable step towards the revival of industry. Most of us would, no doubt, greatly prefer to see prices rise all over the world, as a result of international measures taken in concert by the leading countries, but only the fanatics who are still hoping for a return to the gold standard at the old parity are frightened at the prospect of a moderate rise here, even if it is not accompanied by a corresponding rise in the countries which are still upon gold. Certainly there ought to be no difficulty in getting almost unanimous assent to the proposition that any step which is calculated still further to lower the level of British prices stands condemned.

This constitutes a very strong argument against the forms of "economy" which find special favour with the back-bench supporters of the present Government. Either the cutting down of insurance benefits, pensions and salaries or the cutting down of Government expenditure on public works is obviously likely, by diminishing the volume of demand for goods and services, to intensify business depression far more than it is likely to stimulate industry by any relief that it can yield in the burden of taxation.

Moreover, there is no need for these "economies." No one in his senses can pretend that we are still in the throes of a financial crisis which threatens the stability of our financial position. We have been far more nervous lately about a possible rise than about a possible fall in the value of sterling. We have drastically cut down our imports, with highly unfortunate reactions on the rest of the world. If we are now, in addition, to begin again cutting down our domestic demand even for home-produced goods and services, how on earth is industry to be given a chance of revival? We have said in this article nothing about the injustice of the proposed economies, or of their disastrous long-run effects on our national efficiency and happiness, heavily as these must weigh in the scale of judgment in any reasonable person's mind. We have preferred to put the case, for this occasion, on narrower grounds, which ought to appeal even to those who are not moved at all by the privations of the unemployed, or the evil effects of "economy" on the distribution of wealth. Even if these considerations be dismissed, the case against the proposed "economies" is amply strong enough on purely business grounds to carry conviction to anyone who is prepared to look squarely at the facts of the situation.

A LONDON DIARY

IT is very difficult to gauge at any particular moment the attitude of "public opinion" towards war and the strident, sentimental, smug nationalism so popular in some quarters. I remember—years ago now—going to one of the first post-war war films in the Strand. A woman in the audience rose and protested loudly against the film and against war. She was allowed to say her say and no one protested against the protest. Last week I went to see *Mädchen in Uniform* in Oxford Street. There is a sly and subtle satire of the Potsdam variety of militarism in this magnificent film, and the audience obviously enjoyed it. But it was preceded by a film devoted to the British variety of navalism, *Men Like These*. The heroes in the sunken submarine were very vocal about being British and the sentimental treacle was thickly patriotic. I, personally, felt slightly sick, but remained cowardly silent. Two young men near me expressed their disapproval aloud, but not very loud, in sarcastic comments. At the end of the film some of the audience applauded and a few, among them (I think) my two young men, hissed. Two women, a few rows ahead, turned round and glared furiously at me, thinking, no doubt, that I had been the hisser. I saw in their eyes the horrible glare of those who gave civilians white feathers in the worst days of the war. I regretted that I had been too cowardly to hiss.

* * *

I see that Mussolini and Mr. Garvin have both congratulated Mr. MacDonald on his opening speech at Lausanne. I should like to add my meed of praise. It was all that one could expect of an opening speech: it was finely phrased; it created an atmosphere; it was necessarily confined to the generalities which have been on the lips of every political and economic observer for the last twelve months. Was it not, therefore, rather hard on Mr. MacDonald that Mr. Garvin should write under the heading, "Mr. MacDonald does it," these consecutive paragraphs?

> Above all, in opening the Lausanne Conference last Thursday, the Prime Minister, who has excelled in many Conferences during the last few years, made the most eloquently earnest and searching speech he has ever delivered at any of them. The ringing force of his delivery matched the strength of the matter. He rose to the hour and grappled with the case. He made a profound impression on his auditors.
>
> Mr. MacDonald's argument may be paraphrased in a few sentences. The present slump, though there was something very like it forty years ago, is on the whole the most universal economic disaster in history. It shadows the life and discourages the efforts of mankind in every continent. World trade continues to fall in a way that no single nation can arrest. The nations have less and less means of buying from each other. Nothing but world-action can cope with a world-catastrophe. Civilisation is on trial. "A system is crumbling under our feet."

If this had been written by anyone except Mr. Garvin I should have suspected irony: as it is, it represents merely a superb example of Mr. Garvin's capacity for getting excited over the obvious.

* * *

We have heard something in England of the new law which legalises the flogging of adult blacks by white employers in South Africa, but the facts revealed in a recent memorandum issued by the Johannesburg Joint Council of Europeans and Natives have not, as far as I know, been commented on in this country. If the Council were not a very responsible body of persons who proceeded by research and not by headlines, one might suspect sensationalism. Last year the Chief Magistrate of Johannesburg estimated that 100,000 criminal charges would have been heard in the courts before the end of the year, 30,000 of them resulting in sentences of imprisonment—which means that *one third of the total population of Johannesburg* went through the courts on criminal charges and one tenth imprisoned. This astonishing state of affairs is the effect of attempting to keep the natives "in their place" by hedging about all their movements by restrictive regulations. Natives do not have a single life-long identification certificate, but "night passes" whenever they want to go anywhere. A native in arrears with his taxes goes to prison. Breach of a labour contract is punished with imprisonment. In some parts of the city the non-payment of rent is a crime for which he goes to gaol. As a result none of the natives feel any respect for the law, none of the offences carry with them any taint of moral delinquency, and Johannesburg's Chief Magistrate states that the effect of imprisonment on the native African is that "the majority, if not all, are irreparably ruined by serving a period in gaol." It seems that the Government and the Judiciary are getting worried at the prospect of a large proportion of the population being "irreparably ruined," and by way of remedy a conference of senior Judges called by the Minister of Justice suggested that fines should take the place of imprisonment and that the fines should be deducted from wages and collected from employers. It is not surprising that both the natives and the Joint Council are up in arms against this proposal, which would put the native altogether in the hands of his employer and open the door to all manner

of abuses. It would also mean that it would be more than ever difficult to get rid of the regulations which would have become a very lucrative source of revenue to the municipality!

* * *

When I first heard an account of the ritual of the anniversary dinner of "The English Mistery" I was inclined to dismiss it as an imperfect recollection of the famous dining club described in *Zuleika Dobson*. Since then the literature of this remarkable organisation has come into my hands, and I am assured that "The English Mistery" (address: 4 Bloomsbury Square, W.C.1) really exists, that a number of aristocratic young Conservatives actually belong to it, that Lord Lymington is one of its chief lights, and that, in plain fact, it is not a frolic of imagination emanating from Mr. Beerbohm or Mr. Chesterton. This handbook, if I may use so plebeian a word, explains that it has a number of officers, a Chancellor, a Chief and other Syndics, Lords of the Mistery, and a Recorder, and that its members are of four ranks: Syndics, Misters, Companions and Associates.

> Companions are those who take an oath to conform to special standards of conduct and taste laid down from time to time by the Syndicate. Men of eighteen years and over are alone eligible for investiture as Companions, and breed, health, character and ability shall all be carefully considered before investiture. Companions will be men who have been carefully selected from the Associates by the Chief Mister of a Kin . . . Associates are men or women who can satisfy a Mister that they are of pure English origin (such origin being proved as from the first of January, 1870) who are engaged in a service conducted on lines approved by the Mistery. . .

The applicant for entry to "The English Mistery" pledges himself to give "loyal support to the principles and practices of English Royalism as propounded by the English Mistery." I shall not attempt to comment on these principles and practices. I must be content with some extracts.

* * *

The documents of the English Mistery are headed with a cabalistic sign in red and black. Under the heading "The Nature of the Mistery" I read that its aims are "the creation of a sound ethical basis for national politics. It pursues this aim by self-discipline and the practise of good taste by its members . . . it aims at no unconstitutional action in English politics. The English Mistery is not a party: it is not a secret society: it is not a Fascist organisation." Its policy "is based upon principles derived from the instincts and traditions of English breeds, and not from theory, dogma, doctrine or opinion."

> *Taste is the capacity to choose between good and evil in breeding, diet, habits, and direction of energy.* In essence it springs from the maintenance of a perfect balance of instincts.
>
> A leader is a man of taste . . . The Mistery . . . aims at substituting aristocracy for democracy. Aristocracy begins among the best in English workmen and ends in ever-widening circles of responsibility at the throne itself.

From "revised orders of 1931" I select the following passages:

> An unbiased mind will reject all trace of liberal thought.
>
> The English Mistery must first uphold and preserve instinct, and the main instinct is that of self-preservation, which without self-control leads to fighting between individuals and complete anarchy. It is the constant breaking away of this instinct from the control of tradition that causes Liberalism, party politics and unrestricted competition. While, then, we must preserve every instinct, particularly the fighting instinct, in its inherent vigour, we must harness instinct by character and tradition so that the instinct of individual self-interest is turned outward and does not prey upon fellow-members of the body politic.

These admirable sentiments are followed on the next pages by the following recommendations to Companions in regard to their behaviour towards "*people in general*":

> Everyone should be estimated according to his worth as a real servant. The most active goodwill should be accorded to every efficient and patriotic person, and *no opportunity of enhancing the prestige and increasing the wealth, power and prosperity of such persons should be missed.*
>
> Where any kind of suffering, either from disease, deformity, or failure of any kind exists, companions should discriminate between those who are suffering in consequence of service, and should in consequence be respected; the victims of inevitable accident, who should alone be regarded with pity; *and those whose inferiority is due to bad breeding or bad taste.*
>
> As the object of all argument is to produce agreement, avoid all argument or debate with anyone who has a different end in view, because no agreement is possible between persons with different motives. *Avoid, therefore, entering into arguments with Liberals and idealists, with diseased persons and persons of alien descent.*

Finally:

> Remember that by heredity and in environment the English race differs fundamentally from other races. Even the Greek and Roman classics are useful to Englishmen only as a mental discipline and not as a guide to tradition. Still further removed are the oriental nations and among them the Jewish tradition. . . There is much to be learned from every culture, but it does not follow that everyone can learn it . . . Most people are likely to find that their best course lies in a policy of insularity. *Avoid everything that emanates from ill-bred nations.*

Only the italics are mine.

* * *

Of the newspaper extracts sent me this week I select the following:

> The successful men are conceited and ill-mannered and the charming, unselfish men who know how to treat a girl are too poor to treat her.—A correspondent in the *Sunday Express.*
>
> Mr. "A" was no doubt the first to regret his indiscretion in having any kind of friendship with a woman other than his wife.—The Recorder of London as reported in the *Daily Telegraph.*
>
> Gibbs (Sir Philip), who was in my youth editor of the leader page of the *Daily Mail*, has become since, of course, one of the most chivalrous of all journalists.—Hannen Swaffer in the *Daily Herald.*

CRITIC.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF HARAKIRI

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

IN the East, as elsewhere, the primary causes of war have only an indirect connection with the group-psychology of a nation. The popular clamour that makes conflict inevitable is now seen to be among the secondary causes, which may be carefully worked up in advance by what might be called the exploitation of unemployed emotion. An apparently spontaneous outburst of patriotism may be produced in a given community as neatly as the familiar knee-jerk by a tap on the right spot. The complex and dangerous situation in the Far East to-day makes it worth while to follow the Japanese emotional engineers in their search for the right spot to get the maximum kick out of the populace. It is unnecessary (probably impossible) for us to "understand" the "mentality" revealed; but what is important is that English people should realise the lines on which a highly suggestible people, capable at present of endless harm, is likely to react in an emergency. The object of these few examples drawn from the Japanese press in the last five months is to indicate these lines, and to leave the moral to point itself.

One of the essentials of militant patriotism is the Hero. A campaign without heroes will not take long to exhaust the public interest. Yet the rounding-up and shooting-down of bandits by forces superior in equipment, supplies, and organisation is not likely to provide a sufficiency of heroes for the stimulation of the masses. Fortunately for the moral effect of the campaign on Japan, a woman leapt into the breach.

On the eve of his departure for Manchuria, a lieutenant attached to the Ambulance Corps of the 4th Division returned home to find a note pasted to the door. It told all callers to find him at his regimental H.Q. "Hurrying into his wife's sitting room . . . he found his spouse dead in an extremely orderly manner," says the *Osaka Mainichi.* She had put on her best costume, written the usual suicide-note, and then cut her throat with a dagger, "which her soldier-husband has treasured." The note explained that her

suicide would leave him free to serve the Emperor without worrying about his wife. "Words fail to describe my joy to leave you before your heroic march to Manchuria to-morrow."

The affair of the "Samurai Wife" not only gave the shriek-press a splendid opportunity: this "female version of General Nogi's harakiri," as the pidgin-papers dubbed it, set up an example of martyrdom that bids fair to burn like Latimer's candle. It has been followed by dozens of attempts at patriotic suicide since last December. The latest was that of a girl who threw herself under a troop-train in Himeji, when some soldiers were leaving to take over garrison-duty. Her note kept the same tone: "Though I cannot be a soldier, I can encourage them by dying" (*Japan Chronicle*, April 21st).

Though it is this peculiar attitude towards suicide that seems of main importance, there are other complexes to be used; and another turns on the reactions of the populace to the Japanese sword. These are mediæval. Their obsoleteness is held up as a recommendation. The press loves to explain that no "foreigner" can ever understand the devotion of the Japanese soldier to the colours, still less the reverence of the *bushi* (warrior) for his sword. The excessive popularity of the "sword-plays" which consist of little but slow manslaughter (intolerably tedious to Europeans), is another side of a complex that seems incredible in the mind of a modern world-power. Yet when a reservist private in command of a number of Chinese-Manchurian police at the Fenghuangcheng "peace-maintenance-office" "became impatient" with some bandits who were shooting at the place, and "drawing the sharp glinting sword . . . made a sortie, hearing behind him the yells of his Chinese comrades, 'Look Out,'" his death was "acclaimed as a unique case of heroism." "The struggle reminiscent of a warrior in mediæval Nippon did not last long" says the egregious *Mainichi*: "the attackers raised their rifles and fired. The private fell to the ground, his fingers firmly gripping his sword-hilt."

This hero rather failed to come off, but Japanese two-handed swords were widely used by the *ronin* (plain-clothes soldiers: dare one say "bandits"?) in Shanghai, as well as by dare-devil naval men, and their mention rarely fails of its effect on the mob.

Male superiority had not long to wait for its vindication. A well-made wire-entanglement at Shanghai defied the best efforts of the pioneers to remove it, and the artillery was either not on the spot or inefficient. Three sappers from Kyushu (the emotional parallel is roughly "Sea-dogs of Devon") exchanged cups of water in the style of *samurai* going to almost certain death, and determined to break it at all costs. They did so, and were blown to bits. This much is certain. Either they attempted to carry out a supply of explosives and were hit, or they actually fastened grenades to themselves before starting. The newspaper accounts contradict their earlier reports and finally decide that they pulled out the pins of the bombs and then rushed into the wire. A fourth man who went out with them and returned alive enjoyed only a day's publicity (with photograph), after which the story became fixed in its popular form, and he was conveniently forgotten. The example to be set was plainly one of self-destruction, not of successful daring.

The dauntless three have been given the name of *niku-dan* (literally "meat-bombs") and have undergone something analogous to canonisation. It has been pointed out by other observers that the heroes selected for apotheosis by the architects of official Shinto are generally those who have died for the Emperor, without very much consideration of their merits as men or as leaders. Photographs of the Three, and prints giving a pictorial account of their death, are now selling all over Japan, and providing material for primary-school homilies, the "Song of the Human Bombs" achieved an instantaneous success, and in some parts shrines have been dedicated to them. At the back of the San-no-Miya shrine in Kobe the present writer saw the three coloured enlargements on an altar, flanked by two candles, and with the traditional offerings of cakes, fruit, coppers, and burning joss-sticks before them. And this within five minutes' walk of one of the centres of international Japan!

The dangers of fanatical nationalism run into such narrow channels need no comment. The typical Englishman who speaks in Macbeth's "Why should I play the Roman fool?" has small sympathy with suicide as the ideal of military valour. To us, Casabianca has always been a somewhat absurd figure in his total lack of "common sense." But in this glorification of self-immolation a definite reflex is being cultivated in a people highly trained in collective emotional response: and it is a reflex totally out of place in a world of close-knit economic relations, whose great powers have nominally renounced slaughter as a method of policy. Yet in Japan the common sense of those unwilling to be slaughtered at a word is represented as "western materialism," powerless against the "spiritual" qualities of the Land of the Gods. It remains to be seen in what manner this close emotional integration of a people still somewhat less than grown-up will be employed: whether it will be dropped now that Manchuria has served its turn as a patriotic occasion. Certainly these aspects of the search for violent antidotes for the working leaven of "dangerous thought" in Japan gives one singularly little faith in the "common sense of the Japanese people" and its supposedly restraining effect on the militarists.

THE LONG HOLIDAY

An eminent business man has been criticising the Civil Service on the ground that the taxpayer is not getting the most possible work out of it at the least possible cost. "Minor questions," he declared, "which would be decided in a matter of minutes in private business could occupy many weeks in Whitehall." He added that it could not be maintained "that the higher staff was worked to a maximum capacity, so long as officials were entitled to leave equal to one-sixth of the working year."

Few things give us more pleasure than to accuse other people of not working so hard as they ought to work. Idle dukes protest bitterly against the idleness of cooks, and wish they were in the kitchen, earning money for nothing, instead of toiling backwards and forwards in the paddock at Ascot under a tropical sun. Professional men gnash their teeth when they think of the hundreds of thousands of so-called working-men who deliberately prefer being on the dole to doing an honest day's work. Heads of businesses sigh as they remember their own hard lot and compare it with the care-free leisurely existence of their employees. The rich accuse the poor of not working or wanting to work, and the poor accuse the rich of not working or wanting to work; and so all classes are enabled to live in an enjoyable simmer of envy.

I have never been in any doubt myself about the work done by other people. Very few of them, so far as I can see, work nearly as hard as they ought to work. Even as a child I was struck by the happiness of the life of the farmer and the agricultural labourer. What they called work I regarded as play. If sitting in a red and blue cart and occasionally saying "Hupp!" to the horse that was dragging it sleepily along the ruts in the road was work, it was work that I was willing to do for nothing. Nor did it seem to me to require any serious expenditure of effort to carry an armful of hay to the horse's manger, or to lead a horse to the pond for his evening drink. Even walking behind a plough looked easy till I tried it and the plough went the wrong way. Forking hay to the stack-builders was exhausting, but pleasantly exhausting; and if I had had the strength I should have gone on with it longer.

And the farmer himself spent half his time merely watching other people doing these things—looking critically at the haystack as it rose into the perfect shape, saying something or other to the man who was taking a horse to the blacksmith's, gazing at the machine that was threshing the corn without any effort on his part, taking a walk to a field to see how some crop was ripening, going to another field to count the sheep, driving ten miles to attend a fair that was livelier than Noah's Ark. All the year round, idle pleasure succeeded idle pleasure in such a fashion that if you had offered me the choice between being a farmer or being Prime Minister I should instantly have voted for the life of the farmer.

If mere absence of effort is all you demand, however, I am not sure that the shop-keeper in a small market-town has not even an easier life than the farmer. Except on market days and Saturdays, how pleasantly peaceful is the life of a country draper! Hours may pass before a customer comes in to ask for anything that costs more than a shilling. If you go in to buy something, a hunt for the object begins at the pace of a slow-motion picture. Boxes are taken down, peered into and put back again. The tops of glass cases are opened and closed again. Expeditions are made into the shadowed recesses of the shop. You are left by the counter in a very Paradise of stagnation. No one enters, and the somnolence of the place almost persuades you that you are having a dream till at last the draper's assistant returns with the bone stud and wraps it in a twist of paper. Now, it is my conviction that the draper knew very well all the time where the stud was, but that, knowing also that not another human being would break the silence of the establishment till closing-time, he was determined to make the most of his opportunity to enjoy human society as long as he could and to prove to you and to himself what a strenuous life he was living. The man who does the least work is the man who seizes every opportunity to appear busy. Ever since I was at school and used under a master's eye to pretend to be busy myself, I have distrusted anyone who appeared busy. I instinctively suspect him of being a secret slacker. But then I suspect most men of being secret slackers. I cannot, for example, see how a motor salesman who lounges about his showroom all day without, perhaps, selling a single car between breakfast and closing time, can justify himself to himself as one of the world's workers. If he did sixty minutes' really hard work in the course of a day he would feel that the day had been an exceptionally busy one. The West End jeweller, again, seems to me to have far too much time on his hands, and I question whether the fashionable tailor puts in a much harder day's work than the country gentleman. I suspect all business men, indeed, of having too easy a time of it. Some authority recently estimated that all the work an ordinary business man does in the course of a day could be easily compressed into two or three hours. It would be going too far to say that every business man is a loafer pretending to be busy. The business man who indulges in gambling operations leads almost as strenuous a life as the professional backer of horses. Care sits on his brow even during his two hours' lunch and pursues him round the golf course on Saturday and Sunday. But the ordinary business man, it seems to me, spends more time talking about business than doing it. Compared with mine, his life seems to be one long holiday, with occasional half-hour intervals of concentrated energy.

It is for this reason that I smiled when I read the eminent business man's summons to the Civil Service to a life of greater activity. Does the eminent business man really believe that he is a harder worker than those Civil Servants who calculate how much income tax they can get out of us and then pester us till they get it? I have known and heard of many industrious men, but never have I met elsewhere with such staggering industry as that of the income-tax department of the Civil Service. The eminent business man protests against the two months' annual holiday that is given to these magnificently tireless servants of the State. For my part, I would gladly give a two years' holiday to the entire staff as a reward for their molelike diligence.

There is, I contend, no worse form of economy than cutting down the holidays of men who do good work. It is my belief that a man who knows how to work can do more work in ten months than he could in twelve. We cannot measure good work mechanically by months, days or hours. A racehorse will expend as much energy in two and a half minutes as a plough horse will expend in an entire day. It would be as foolish for the plough horse to say to the racer: "You slacker, most of the day you are idle," as it would be for the racehorse to say to the plough horse: "You slacker, you are so bone-lazy that you never even break into a trot." As for the matter of long holidays, any man whose department cannot get on without him for two months must have organised his department very badly. This being so, and the world being now able to produce so much more than it can consume, there should be a movement in favour of a general extension of holidays. I should like to see longer holidays given even to business men on condition that they worked harder during business hours. Let them work as hard as the rest of us—as doctors and clergymen and Civil Servants and journalists and printers—and they will find that they have so much time left on their hands that they can take a six months' holiday in the year.

Y. Y.

TO THOSE IN CONFERENCE

TO you who hold our destiny in your hands,
Experts and statesmen—that your work may speed,
We, the dumb masses whom you boast to lead
Make our petition that you take your stands
No longer on our "rights" but on our need.

We sent you to Geneva and Lausanne
To bring us back no trophies to our pride
(Like those for which some millions of us died),
But just in the faint hope that man, as man,
Might find some refuge from the rising tide.

We've tried out cleverness: at our behest,
You've argued, wrangled, bargained, year by year,
For petty triumphs which we bought too dear.
Since tricks have failed us, wouldn't it be best
To face the truth, and wipe the record clear

Of your past failures? Why not, for a change,
Take even big risks for a bigger stake?
And since each State bends when its neighbours break,
Admit the simple fact; nor think it strange
To lay more emphasis on "give" than "take"?

We're mostly fools: no doubt when you come back
We should complain you sold us horn and fleece.
Won't it be worth it, though, if youth shall cease
To see in life a weary *cul-de-sac*,
And old, tired folk, can end their days in peace?

MACFLECKNOE.

Correspondence

FATHERS AND SONS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Your correspondent in Germany who likens President Hindenburg's recent intervention on behalf of the Junkers to "an assertion of paternal authority," has surely hit the nail on the head. In every country to-day, as I see it, the fundamental conflict of ideas is not to be explained in terms of any ism or orthodox political doctrine. It goes much deeper and has to do with the place of money and its social effects in our national and international life. On this matter fathers and sons

have been speaking a different language, the fathers, almost to a man, accepting and possibly welcoming the plutocratic standards of the late nineteenth century, and the sons, on the contrary, with a livelier sense that neither that plutocracy nor what we are pleased to call "democracy" is eternal, rebelling against the economic and financial system which has brought the world to the present pass and which, so far from abolishing war, seems to be fast working up for the next war.

Now, this so-called "generation question" stands out in conspicuous relief in Germany, where, however, the sons have an unexpected — and possibly unwelcome — ally in the grandfathers, that is to say, people like the East Prussian Junkers and the German President who, as your correspondent says, are still thinking in terms of land and not of money. If we take this into account we may perhaps better understand the hybrid character of the Nazi movement. A large number of the older generation of Germans, especially in the northern and eastern districts, were before the war—and are still more to-day—wholly out of sympathy with the big industrial and moneyed interests which had the ear of the Kaiser and which dominated the German political scene in the days of "prosperity." These survivors of the old Prussian military and landed aristocracy may well think to have more fellow-feeling with the young Conservative-revolutionaries streaming out of the universities which constitute the main body of National Socialism.

The Republican-democratic Germany which was set up in 1918–19, at the behest of the Allies, was of course wedded to the established capitalist system and bourgeois ideas and values. Not unnaturally, the experiences through which they have gone have caused the majority of Germans to revolt against a regime the main object of which appeared to be to make Germany, like the rest of the world, safe for plutocracy.

Anyone who has lived in Germany at all in recent years must recognise the strength of feeling against those individualist principles on which our existing capitalist and "democratic" society is based. The influence and example of Soviet Russia have transformed German sociological thought in a way that we over here can scarcely conceive. Therefore—and particularly since there seems to be no hope for Germany from the Lausanne Conference—I cannot think that Chancellor von Papen has much prospect of stemming the collectivist tide through his unnatural alliance of Junkers and industrial magnates.

It is because the Hitler movement is "basically anti-capitalist" that it has behind it the most vital and forward-looking elements in the country. Its Socialism, as defined by Herr Gregor Strasser in his recent broadcast, is surely as genuine and certainly more up to date than the Socialism of the official Social-Democratic Party. That party, just in the same way as the Labour Party in this country, has forfeited the goodwill and support of a large majority of the younger generation, simply because it has not had the courage of its convictions, but has weakly capitulated, for the sake of cash benefits (*Tarifrecht*), to the vested interests of organised Capital.

Your correspondent tells us that the Trade Union leaders have now a revised programme with a complete plan for the fundamental socialisation of Germany. He also describes the ideas of the Left wing of the Nazis as "important and interesting." If that is so what is to prevent the linking up of the Trade Unions with the genuinely Socialist elements of the Nazi movement and similar Catholic groups? Cannot the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION break away from the general chorus over here crabbing Germany's National Socialism and recognise that, while the "Liberal" regime of post-war Germany is bankrupt in every sense of the word, there is a great opportunity, as the events of the next few months will surely show, for Germany to build up for herself the new order of which Herr Strasser speaks, based on considerations of social justice, which cannot but expedite the very necessary transformation of "civilisation" in other countries?

W. HORSFALL CARTER.

16 Great James Street, W.C.1.

THE SECRET ASSASSINS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Your leading article of June 18th ought to be published and broadcast everywhere, especially in Geneva. I know what these "Secret Assassins" are. Private armament firms, aiming only at dividends by promoting wars and rumours of war, send their agents everywhere, but especially to Disarmament Conferences. Such an agent went crawling about among us correspondents in Geneva during the Naval Conference of 1927, attempting by every means to induce us to assist him in wrecking the Conference, as in the end it was wrecked. Is there no publication ready to expose the abominations of these assassins who grow rich upon the blood of the innocent and ignorant peoples of the world?

HENRY W. NEVINSON.

[We understand that a 48-page pamphlet entitled *The Secret International: The Armament Firms at Work*, is to be published next week, at the price of sixpence, by the Union of Democratic Control, 34, Victoria Street, S.W.1. The pamphlet will contain a good deal of new information as well as a summary of what has already been published.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

HAS "IT" BROKEN DOWN?

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—"Critic" gave, in the London Diary of June 4th, some instances of the breakdown of the economic system, and you may care to add my own experience to them. One is forbidden to take more than a certain amount of money out of Germany, Austria, Hungary, or Roumania, and there appear, furthermore, to be in some cases regulations as to the amount which one may take in. The average traveller seldom masters the precise rules beforehand, and if "It" has not broken down already it is owing to the good sense of the various frontier officials, who tend to interpret their fantastic instructions discreetly. Otherwise the international expresses could not run.

The moral, from my own point of view, is that those of us who still have the energy and money should visit Europe at once, before we are permanently confined to our own parishes and allowed to listen to nothing but the village band. All patriotic exhortations to remain in England should be ignored, for, surely, there was never a time when it was more desirable to keep in touch with old friends on the Continent, and, if possible, to make new friends. As regards ways and means, travellers' cheques appear to work—at least mine have not yet been taken from me, though they were once examined with suspicion. Five-pound notes, hitherto the British tourist's anchor, have now become his winding-sheet, and should be left at home.

Bucharest. E. M. FORSTER.

A NEW CURRENCY

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—On reading Mr. L. J. Cadbury's criticism of my articles on "The New Currency" I was tempted to reply: "And is it not written in the book of Salter?" While Mr. Cadbury remains so much under the influence of Sir Arthur Salter it is very difficult to argue with him. If he really believes that the old system of international trading and money-lending can be restarted in a world that is rapidly becoming disillusioned about gold, I am sure that all Sir Arthur Salter's improvements to the gold standard will be of inestimable value. But I believe that the old system has broken down hopelessly, is past repairing, and will never work properly again. I am convinced that something new and revolutionary will have to take its place.

Mr. Cadbury needs to be more realistic. He declares that monetary systems should have two ends in view: (1) they should maintain world prices at a fairly constant level, and (2) between each other this should maintain the same relative value. He admits that in the first respect the gold exchange system has broken down. Surely Mr. Cadbury knows that unless every nation simultaneously pursues an identical internal monetary policy, which means in effect an identical wages policy, it is impossible to have both stable exchanges and stable internal price levels. What are the chances to-day of the nations pursuing identical internal policies? I am suggesting that the British nation, for one, would not tolerate a reduction in wages merely because another great industrial nation, with whom it is maintaining a rate of exchange at gold parity, has cut its wages and lowered its standard of living. If there is disparity in wage levels or industrial costs, we can still preserve our freedom of action: (1) by allowing our exchange rates to move freely, and (2) by bartering our products for the foodstuffs and raw materials of our customers. That is why I maintain that an entirely new system of international trading will have to be devised by this country.

The "barter" system of trade is being forced upon the world to-day because the gold standard has broken down. My proposal was intended to make a virtue of necessity and to construct

out of the "barter" stage a more enlightened and equitable system of international trading. I am well aware that trade is triangular, but when several countries have agreed under trade treaties to co-operate in a clearing house on the lines I have suggested, triangular trade will be taken into account.

The real difficulty in an international system of clearing houses will be to obtain equilibrium by the device of altering exchange rates. This was a point to which Mr. Hutton alluded in his letter. I will admit that if the alteration of exchange rates does not lead to equilibrium in the international accounts of the countries trading on this system, the Governments will have to assume a complete monopoly of external trade and control both imports and exports.

Mr. Cadbury has failed to appreciate that my composite commodity price index is not an international but a national index. I anticipated that there would be a number of countries who would peg their rates on sterling when they found that the British index was a reliable one. Of course, for calculations of the internal price levels the nations participating would have to set up their own composite commodity price indices, weighting the commodities and services included in different proportions. Mr. Cadbury's objection that a managed world currency "needs a degree of international trust which does not exist to-day" has no point, seeing that I am arguing for a managed sterling standard which many countries will follow. This is what apparently alarms Mr. Prud'homme, who, being an American and not knowing the English for "sterilisation," lays the blame for the breakdown of the gold standard largely on Great Britain. But I am intrigued by Mr. Prud'homme's suggestion that we might manage a new currency system for a fee.

Certainly I do not ignore tariffs, war debts and reparations, and crazy international loans: it was not these hideous things which ruined the gold standard, but the fact that the gold standard does not allow for the correction of price movements without upsetting both capital and labour, and without creating a "fear psychology" which makes for hoarding of gold on the one hand, or speculation in commodities on the other. The gold standard might work perfectly in a perfect world, where fear or speculation did not exist, and where Sir Arthur Salter sat enthroned at the head of an International Loans Council, bestowing rationalised credits on grateful and docile Governments. But the world is not yet perfect, and if the attempt to remove some of the worst imperfections fails at the Reparations or coming Economic Conference, we shall be forced to adopt something like my clearing house system of enlightened barter in order to ensure the continuity of our food and raw material supplies.

E. H. DAVENPORT.

The Athenæum Club.

THE INDIAN IMPASSE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I should like to say how refreshing it was to read your leader in the issue of May 7th on "The Impasse in India." One reads so frequently in the leader columns of Indian daily papers of the loyalist leagues that are being enthusiastically started in villages all over the country, and of the defeat and bankruptcy of the Congress, while in the small type of the news columns are records of Congress processions dispersed here, Congress headquarters raided somewhere else, and Congress volunteers arrested everywhere: so that in the end one doubts the co-ordinating faculty of the human mind. Among Europeans the rightness of Government action seems axiomatic; the Congress differs from the Government and is therefore wrong; the crushing of the Congress becomes an end-in-itself. The only thing that threatens the consummation of the policy is the (apparently) growing strength of the Congress under repression. Sooner or later there must be compromise, and the longer it is delayed the harder it will be to inaugurate. There is a hint of sadism about the paternal government that says: "As much jam and cake to-morrow as you can eat," while distributing a last ration of stale bread and water.

R. E. HAWKINS.

Post Box 31, Bombay.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Will you permit me to congratulate you on the excellent article on the Indian situation, entitled "The Indian Impasse," which appeared in your issue of May 7th? It has caught the right perspective, and it has told the British public what it should have been told long, long ago.

The Irish settlement was for the first time in sight when the British Government realised that the only political organisation it could negotiate with was Sinn Fein. To-day the Government in India is trying to carry on with the assistance and co-operation of impotent and dummy political associations and organisations. The only one that matters it has ostracised and driven into the wilderness. And the Government has constantly forgotten, much to the misfortune of the country, that Mahatma Gandhi is a much more tractable person than De Valera and the other Sinn Fein leaders ever were. It is a common fallacy, from which even so uncommon a personality as Sir Samuel Hoare is not free, that the Congress and the Civil Disobedience Movement are synonymous terms. You might as well say that the Reign of Terror was the French Revolution. In India, to-day, in the minds of a very large number of people the Congress stands as the embodiment of the hopes and aspirations of the nation. And the fight against the Congress is looked upon not so much as against a movement of lawlessness as against an insurgent and determined Nationalism. It is an equally great mistake to think that Nationalism is the proud monopoly of caste Hindus.

High Court, Bombay. M. C. CHAGLA.

June 3rd, 1932.

THE ITINERANT SALESMAN

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—With a generous disregard of the cost per line, flamboyant advertisements, written in attractive if misleading language, call insistently for "far-sighted," enthusiastic sales executives to join "rapidly growing" National Organisations—they are always rapidly growing.

These super-men need have no previous experience, but must merely possess a combination of human qualities seldom to be found in a well-trained man. And all the advertiser really wants is some poor but honest optimist to carry his, the advertiser's, "sales baby." This type of advertisement ensures wide response, for who does not feel he is a budding "sales executive"? The chosen candidates are hurriedly trained and turned loose upon an unsuspecting public. Paid solely by results at a high commission rate, or by means of a pittance in salary, some expenses and commission, the salesman is placed under the sheer necessity of selling to live.

The system is bad for the salesman and bad for the manufacturer and his customer. There is a lack of confidence between the three parties to every sales transaction, and where this is lacking it is impossible to build up lasting goodwill. A large proportion of the men attracted by this type of advertisement will never make good salesmen, and the hurried training they get tends merely to arm them with verbal plausibility—the surest weapon for freezing the average English prospect—while a sound knowledge of the goods the salesman is offering tends to become a secondary consideration. Complaints, which have precedence over orders in the catechism of the good salesman, are neglected when he is fighting against monetary odds to secure orders, and the establishment of mutual trust so necessary in all selling is rendered impossible. Selling costs are high, and the customer pays the price—somewhat painlessly—by instalments.

There is a wide gap between the bowler-hatted gentleman who was always to be found by the fireside at the commercial hotels in any town from 4 p.m. onwards, and who was chiefly renowned for a fund of good stories, and the frenzied, almost desperate, order-getter of modern days. The gap will be filled one day by the manufacturer who chooses his men with the greatest care and pays them a fair wage, who demands their loyalty, and makes them proud to sell his goods.

11 Grape Street, W.C.2. REGINALD BRAYNE.

HOW IT HITS HOLLAND

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Your paper has always impressed me as "seeing the other man's point of view." That is why I hope that you will print in your pages the following, which I do not think is very widely realised in our country.

I am obliged to spend a few months in Holland, and very soon after my arrival here I began to see things which have now become quite obvious and certain. In all our controversies about Britain's going off the gold standard, we have missed a point which cannot be indifferent to any internationally minded person; the very great suffering and hardships it has imposed on peoples, who, because they consider themselves to be

bound by international agreement, try to postpone following Britain's example as long as they can. Which is, of course, incidentally, greatly to Britain's advantage, as it would not have been much use if all countries had gone off the gold standard immediately when we did. Here in Holland losses have been enormous. The State Bank of the Netherlands has lost its entire working capital, so large an amount of its real capital was invested in pounds, which were considered the world over to be the safest currency. All business agreements between Dutch and British firms, which still hold good for years to come, have to be fulfilled, but are paid in depreciated British pounds, which means a loss of at least one quarter of the expected payment. All private investments in pounds, which were not gold-covered, have lost one quarter of their value. It can easily be understood what the effect has been on conditions in Holland. The State is economising most drastically on salaries and pensions; private concerns, for so far they are able to carry on, have stopped pensions, and discharged as many of their staffs as they possibly could. The unemployment, especially in intellectual and administrative circles, has gone up by leaps and bounds. Teachers, clerks, former high officials, fill the labour exchanges. There is an air of depression and of bravely borne misery over the towns. In Scotland, where I live, things have not perceptibly changed. Picture houses are crowded, tea-rooms and shops do their usual brisk trade.

Foreign travel does not always make one proud to be British.

Ubbergen, Holland. M. EDDISON.

THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Since my widowhood by the death of the late Theodore Watts-Dunton, I have been obliged to take note of a series of detractions—all apparently emanating from a source tainted by obvious jealousy of his influence over Swinburne and of the fraternal affection which Swinburne extended to him.

Generally this detraction was of a kind to be ignored by all except critics with the faculty for writing illuminating essays. But recently, in a daily paper traditionally supposed to address itself to gentlemen and ladies as distinct from *hoi polloi*, I read a description of my husband as "that ridiculous dispenser of fakes"—a description written by a reviewer of M. Georges Lafourcade's recent book about Swinburne.

I think you will agree with me that "fakes" is a synonym for forgeries, and that such an expression would, if applied to a living person, be sufficient cause for a libel action and a claim for heavy damages. The dead cannot bring actions, but I venture to suggest that our laws should be so improved by a new Act of Parliament that those who suffer from blackguardly abuse of their loved ones should be empowered to bring offenders into a Court of Justice, there, if guilty, to receive the same penalty which their victim in his lifetime could have caused to be inflicted on them. CLARA WATTS-DUNTON.

The Pines,
11 Putney Hill, S.W.

SNOBBERY

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—By an inadvertence for which I am not responsible, my signature appears in your issue of June 18th as "Russell." Ever since, through no fault of my own, I became a peer, I have been trying to persuade my snobbish countrymen not to use my title, but it is up-hill work. I shall therefore be grateful if you will publish this letter.

Carn Voel, Portheurno, Penzance. BERTRAND RUSSELL.

[We printed the names of the signatories just as they were sent to us. The snobbery was not ours.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

THE S.C.R.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—A week-end school is being held on June 25th and 26th at Digswell Park, Welwyn, Herts, under the auspices of this Society, and, while there is no more accommodation left for those wishing to stay the week-end, possibly many of your readers and their friends might care to go over for the day. The Chairman of the School is Mr. C. M. Lloyd and the Hostess, Mrs. Amabel Williams-Ellis. On Saturday the speakers, who will open discussion on various aspects of the Russian experiment, are Mrs. Barbara Wootton and Mr. D. S. Mirsky: on Sunday Mr. Maurice Dobb and Mrs. B. L. King. There are frequent trains from King's Cross, and Green Line buses.

ISOBEL GODDARD, Secretary,
June 21st. Society for Cultural Relations with U.S.S.R.

NATIVE LANDS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Your issue of April 30th, which has just reached me, contains a reference to land taken from the Kenya natives for which they have never been paid. Unfortunately the land problem in most parts of Africa is not soluble by anything so simple as a money payment. If you expropriate a European peasant against reasonable compensation he can go to town and set up in business; but this course is not open to the African. To a primitive agricultural people the only possible compensation that can be made for the loss of their land is the provision of more land elsewhere—which explains the fact that the sale of land is practically unknown among primitive peoples.

The fact that all the best land in Kenya has been taken from the natives is certainly one among many reasons why they should be given a fairer share of the wealth derived from it. But so much confusion of thought exists, in the minds of many of those who have the interests of subject races most at heart, through the assumption that it is safe to draw conclusions as to the treatment of African problems from analogies based on European conditions, that it seems worth while to point out this important difference. L. P. MAIR.

Kisimula, Bulemezi,
Uganda.

Miscellany

DRAMA

AT the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, Mr. Alfred Farrell presents and produces (admirably) an old domestic Drama in three acts which is well worth seeing—Sir Arthur Pinero's *Sweet Lavender*. It is well acted, in a style which will seem new because it is old. The actors on the stage are not aiming at merely behaving naturally, but at bringing out points in a dialogue cunningly constructed to give them opportunities for displaying the art of acting. There are asides and soliloquies too which give them splendid opportunities. We are back in the theatre of the 'eighties. It is of course more "artificial" than our stage to-day, but how refreshing it is to have a little form put into a dramatic performance! The early Pinero plays of the 'eighties, *The Hobby Horse* 1886, *Dandy Dick* 1887, *Sweet Lavender* 1888, seemed much more alive and real to contemporaries than the works of the cup-and-saucer school which preceded them. Comparatively few people realise to-day what an innovator Sir Arthur Pinero was, how much he enriched the English stage and stiffened and elaborated its technique; and how much more *real* his plays appeared than those of his predecessors. What will strike a modern audience is the artificiality of his methods. The discriminating will find pleasure, however, in that, let alone in the play itself. It sounds an odd thing to say, but as far as methods, not, of course, tone, is concerned, we have been moving back towards the looseness of the "cup-and-saucer school." In a technical sense *Private Lives*, for instance, or *Can the Leopard?* have much more in common with Robertson than with Sir Arthur Pinero's plays. It is possible to revive for our delight an early Pinero because it has a harder form. To revive Robertsonian sentimental naturalism? Hardly. There is a moral in this.

Henry Arthur Jones' *The Silver King* was a distinct advance on *The Colleen Bawn* of Boucicault—there were traces of life in the characters. But a change was brewing, which was to affect both Pinero and Jones. To the historian of the drama of the 'nineties almost as interesting as the new movement itself, the influence of Shaw and Ibsen, is the attempt and the failure of Pinero and Jones to absorb the new spirit. To the dismay of such critics as Clement Scott, who represented the enthusiastic playgoer, they were to change; to

the disappointment of the new critics, Bernard Shaw and William Archer, they could not change enough. "I do not think," wrote Clement Scott in retrospect, "I ever heard one dissentient voice raised against *Sweet Lavender*.

"There was no ignoble subject here; on the contrary, a deep vein of tenderness and humanity. Here we had the human nature that lasts for all time, and I believe that *Sweet Lavender* will perfume the stage of to-morrow when the *Second Mrs. Tanqueray* and the *Gay Lord Quex* are at rest in the cemetery of the dead drama. This dramatic gem was given by Edward Terry to the stage at his own theatre in March, 1888.

"*Sweet Lavender* is, as its happy little title implies, a wholesome, pure, refreshing, and a charming play. Only a simple story of London life, its scene a set of chambers in the Temple, its hero a brave young barrister, its heroine the daughter of a widowed housekeeper; only a tale of man's sure trust and woman's gentle confidence; only a record of the hope of youth contrasted with the repentance of age—this comedy of life passes before us with its alternate ripples of honest laughter and its tears of sympathy, with its genuine humour and its wholesome, manly sentiment." You see the point of view. You can imagine how profoundly antipathetic to it were the changes which were already in the air. Somewhere that disturbing process which we call thinking was going on. I need not indicate the various focuses where that process was at its intensest. It is sufficient to say that in Norway a dramatist had long been writing, who combined the most perfect mastery of stage-craft with a new conception of what was interesting in character on the stage and of the play itself as a means of making others think. Ibsen was slowly dawning in England.

But now it is perfectly delightful to dip again in that old pre-Ibsen atmosphere—and the greatest fun too. We love Dickens, at least most of us. Well, at the Lyric, Hammersmith, we are back again in an atmosphere saturated with Dickens humour and sentiment—not a whiff of Ibsen or Shaw. And how well the play is pulled together! There are two remarkable performances: Miss Whitby as Minnie Gifilliam and Mr. Baliol Holloway as Dick Phenyl, Edward Terry's famous part. Ruth Holt I think is the only character that has been reft of interest by changes in the public mood.

The new generation, the old generation, can both find entertainment, true, of a different kind, at the Lyric, Hammersmith.

DESMOND MACCARTHY.

SHOWMANSHIP IN MUSIC

NOT long ago the very ingenious editor of one of our brightest and most popular reviews entertained a devil unawares. This devil, who was not visible (thus preserving one of the traditions of devils), whispered in his ear that what music chiefly suffered from in this country was lack of publicity. No doubt millions of people who had never heard any music in their lives beyond a local Salvation Army band, or a tin whistle, were now listening not only to the symphonies of Beethoven, the songs of Brahms, and the mass productions of Delius, but even to the incomprehensible complexities of Schönberg and other living composers since the advent of broadcasting. But this was not enough. The daily production and consumption of music in this country went on much too smoothly and without sufficient fuss. What was needed (this devil suggested) was an impresario, a super-Cochran, to handle music as Lord Beaverbrook handles the front page of the *Daily Express*, so as to extract its full sensation value—the sensation to be got from hearing it being superfluous. The strange thing was that this gentleman imagined that it was a really new idea, and, in fear lest he should still think so, or that others might be captivated by this suggestion, I am going to remind them of Berlioz and Barnum.

So far as I know Berlioz had only one contact with the celebrated Mr. Barnum, and that was indirect. In the eighth evening of his *Soirées de l'orchestre* (a book which is a mine of humour, wit, common sense and sensibility), Berlioz is commenting on the fact that in Paris everything is now "worked" to such an extent that all singers and musicians are equally successful, all operas and plays equally masterpieces. Then he adds: "Do what we may in Europe, we shall always be outstripped by the enthusiasm of the New World, for compared with ours theirs is what the Mississippi is to the Seine." Then he gives an account of the arrival of Jenny Lind in America which is worth quoting at length. This account is made in reply to an American named Winter who, "nobody knows why," says Berlioz, is second bassoon in the orchestra. "Can it be," says Winter, "that my countrymen have suddenly become dilettanti?" Berlioz then replies:

> They are beyond doubt dilettanti, and madly if we can believe the newspapers of Mr. Barnum who organised Jenny Lind's triumphs. Just look at what they were saying two years ago, at the time of the arrival of the great songstress on the new continent: When she landed at New York the crowd rushed after her so frantically that immense numbers of persons were crushed. The survivors were nevertheless sufficient to prevent her horses from getting any farther; it was then that, seeing her coachman raise his arm to whip off these indiscreet enthusiasts, Jenny Lind uttered the sublime words now repeated from Upper Canada right down to Mexico—words that bring tears to the eyes of all who hear them quoted: "Don't strike, don't strike! They are my friends, they have come to see me." One hardly knows what to admire most in this never-to-be-forgotten sentence—the heartfelt impulse that dictated it or the genius that clothed the thought in so beautiful and poetic a form. Frantic hurrahs naturally greeted it. The manager of the Transatlantic Line, Mr. Colini, was waiting for Jenny Lind on the landing stage, armed with a huge bouquet. In the centre of the quay stood a triumphant arch of green branches, surmounted with a *stuffed* eagle, which seemed to be waiting to extend her a greeting. At midnight the orchestra of the Philharmonic Society serenaded Mlle. Lind, and for two hours the illustrious songstress was compelled to remain at her window, in spite of the coolness of the night. Next day Mr. Barnum, the clever bird-catcher who has managed to cage the Swedish nightingale for a few months, accompanied her to his Museum, all the curiosities of which he showed her, not omitting the cockatoo and the orang-outang, and finally holding up a mirror to the goddess: "This, madam," he said with exquisite gallantry, "is at present the rarest and most exquisite thing we have to show you."

This is only a sample of the publicity arranged for Jenny Lind of which Berlioz makes fun in characteristic fashion. For example, he says that it is generally believed in New York that "on the day of *her* landing a *Te Deam laudamus* was to be sung in the Catholic churches," and quotes the compliment made to her by a Philadelphian who said "She has seen princes and archbishops at her feet but has refused to be one herself."

Compared with these and other achievements devised by the celebrated Mr. Barnum our modern publicity princes show themselves the merest dunderheads. Before the war there used to be sporadic attempts at the hands of a few feeble news editors of Fleet Street when the Covent Garden opera season began to dress up stories of priceless jewels stolen from a tenor or a diva. An attempt to excite the public with a list of medals, brooches, decorations and titles bestowed upon singers of doubtful artistry by dukes and princes of equally doubtful ancestry had only a mild success. But all this has been abandoned in face of the growing scepticism of the public. Fleet Street is still ignorant but it is shrewd, and even the attempts by some inspired journalists to write about concerts in the style of the Apocalypse failed. Our great publicity mongers are now reduced to arranging for personal paragraphs in the chatty and engaging style of Lord Castlerosse. If only a tenor or a prima donna could be induced to slap Mr. Hannen Swaffer's face in the grill room of the Savoy it would perhaps produce one full house for the singer.

But there is not enough money in music, fortunately, to attract the attention of these trash-trundlers. The B.B.C. has got the public of millions, which is the only public which it pays on a big scale to exploit. And luckily the B.B.C. does not need to flatter the millions to take the

line of least resistance. It cannot be ruined by the competition of an unscrupulous rival searching for its vulnerable place—the blind spot of gullibility in the body public—but can concentrate on seeking after good music, good musicians and good performances. As for the minority the methods of the publicity monger only disgust and alienate them, so that there is little fear yet of anybody trying to turn Mozart or Beethoven into a stunt. But when the names of these and other musicians are as familiar to the masses as are the names of Greta Garbo or Charlie Chaplin, then we may see all sorts of horrors. For it is rather too much to hope that by then we shall have a completely sceptical and tough-minded public. The combination of soft heads and hard hearts seems to be the easiest for nature to achieve, so that the appeal of bunkum is likely to outlast many future Mr. Barnums.

W. J. TURNER.

FROM MOSCOW TO HOLLYWOOD

TWO films at the Forum and the Regal, one from Moscow and one from Hollywood, contain much food for the sociologist. The Russian film, *The Cossacks of the Don*, is primarily interesting because it is presumably an attempt to give the Russian filmgoer what he wants rather than what is good for him. Here is no backward village, to spring into life and intelligence beneath the benign sun of a cream-separator. Here is no pope, prostrate before his ikonostasis to be reduced to impotent rage by the higher revelation of deep ploughing. *The Cossacks of the Don* is a sex-film, which is to me consoling evidence that the emphatically bourgeois vice of love has not yet been eradicated from the Marxian state. The picture is complete with a female star, who deserts one husband to go off with the hero, an extremely personable young gentleman, who, if properly directed, would make a fortune in Hollywood; but she subsequently destroys sympathy for herself by conducting an intrigue with the son of a General during her young lover's absence at the war. On his return home he gives her lover a sound thrashing and then the Revolution breaks out. There is a little anti-war propaganda and some slight attempt to excite the Mujiks against the Cossacks. Otherwise no effort is made to depart from the requirements of an uninspired and never more than competent sex-film, devoid of any "left-wing montage." We should note the heroine type, a great roomy mare of the steppes miles away from the platinum blondes of Wall Street. Passion is the same all the world over; yet we welcome love among the sunflowers as a complete change from love among the skyscrapers. Adultery has its peculiar excitements, though *décors* differ. What you win on the swings you lose on the roundabouts. We can appreciate in *Cossacks of the Don* the unfamiliarity of the setting. A Russian will be deprived of this advantage. On the other hand, he will be able to enjoy what is to us over-familiar, a picture devoted almost entirely to lust.

The Russian cannot well go to Hollywood for his love-making because Hollywood postulates, implicitly, the conventions of the Capitalist State. Hollywood, which is enough to turn any decent bourgeois into a Communist, might possibly turn a Communist into a bourgeois. So Russia must make her own love-stories.

But I can see no reason why *Enemies of the Public* is unsuitable for export to Russia. This film is an early gangster, which has long had trouble with the Censor and now appears badly cut, with consequent damage to the development of the story. But the ambience, the atmosphere, the caddish comedy, the social relations of this picture are excellent; and James Cagney is, I think, much the best actor to have been recently found. For he makes no winking, pathetic appeal to the sentimental side of his audience. He never tries to get you under the ribs. This most natural of actors hands out the rough stuff in an ecstasy of pert ill-breeding. Thus by sacrificing his charm he becomes immensely charming. His great popularity is witness to the growing intelligence of the film public. I hope everyone who does not yet know Cagney will go and make his acquaintance in *Enemies of the Public*, though it is not the most satisfactory picture in which he has appeared. His admirers will go and see him in any case; and the last sequence is superb. Imported to Russia, with the captions etc., slightly disfigured, as the captions of *Cossacks of the Don* have been disfigured (presumably to satisfy the less highly developed societies of the Western World), *Enemies of the Public* might be an excellent piece of Communist propaganda for internal consumption, with Cagney as a *saboteur* of the Five Year Plan. For the Cagneys of this world will have their way with any society with which they come in contact. The art of Cagney is completely international and can be applied to any State, whatever its economic structure. For he is just the Enemy of the People. And it is, unfortunately, in their beastliness that men have the closest family likeness to each other.

One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.

It is idealism that separates mankind. We quarrel about our aspirations, our religion, our self-sacrifice, our justice, and our social dreams. Utopias are unsuitable for transport. When taut with lust or blind with blood we resemble each other mightily. Hence I can recommend *Cossacks of the Don* to Hollywood and *Enemies of the Public* to Moscow.

FRANCIS BIRRELL.

RANCHERA

SILVER through, the water thickly flowing makes a bed
Of the mud-gold, flake-gold, the tin-wolds, the hammered country,
In the day. And on the river
Boats compel loads of metal, slow-sliding on the rising tide . . . Ride
Rio, Rio, Rio, ride, river! Never
Move the bolted planks to search the hold of gold or silver,
Rio de la Plata, river! Never suck the black stack
Down and over; never, river, bend the metal mast, and never
Take the ship, silver river, jealous of the leaving hold.

In strips of crackling tin the winds
Confuse the signals and vex the minds
Of corps-capped captains, and shake dead branches
Of tin in the trees of the dead-flat ranches.

But when the boats are abroad again
And the cloven silver is joined again,
And the tide is riding the light night rain,
And the gold of the banks and the wind's metal
Is wind only and only grain,

The rising moon cleets her own silver,
Her own gold on that deserted river,
And there *Rio, Rio, Rio* falling
Tides whisper, *Rio de la Plata,*
No ship, no hold of silver
Robs now our river. And the calling
Pipes shiver in the night-long country,
Night-long to call the country dancers.

ALAN PRYCE-JONES.

BOOKS IN GENERAL

During the month of July this page will be written by Mr. Harold Nicolson.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

The Art of Monologue

MISS Cornelia Otis Skinner is delighting audiences at the Haymarket perhaps as much by her personality as by her impersonations. In the circumstances, the compliment implies a criticism. Miss Skinner is an admirable student of character and her performances have unquestionably the quality which distinguishes the art of monologue from the impertinence of recitation. But she possesses scarcely at all that supreme gift of the diseuse, the capacity for evocation. To feel, in her humorous sketches especially, the presence of an unseen speaker calls for an effort of the imagination which one should not be required to make. *The Wives of Henry VIII*, an excellent piece of historical reconstruction, much better illustrates her skill. Pride, frivolity, ingenuousness, terror—she understands and can express them all. But even in these scenes, the terrible figure of the King in the background is evoked rather by the words than by the manner. For this reason, one has the illusion that a real drama is taking place only when the impersonated Queen's emotion arises from her own thoughts. Her portrait, for instance, of the homely Anne of Cleves was perfect except in one detail. Henry would be the last man to resist so seductive a smile.

The O.U.D.S. in "Œdipus Tyrannus"

The O.U.D.S. have been much criticised, even in Oxford, because for their summer production this year they chose not only a Greek play (as, indeed, they were compelled to do by Statute) but a play in Greek. But their performances of the *Œdipus Tyrannus* in Magdalen College Grove at the end of last week proved the critics wrong; not only was the speaking of the Greek beautifully done by the whole cast, which lacked the assistance of professional actresses, but the cumulative horror of Sophocles' tragedy was superbly suggested. Mr. W. G. Devlin (Merton), as Œdipus, did not emphasise enough the king's initial dignity, but was magnificent in his final downfall, and Mr. R. P. Heppel (Balliol) was a stately and statuesque Jocasta. Special praise is due to the Coryphæus (Mr. J. S. Daniel, Merton) and the Priest (Mr. D. A. Routh, New College) for the way in which they led the chorus in the lyrical passages, and the only bad failure was that of Mr. D. E. W. Kahn (Balliol), who, as the Messenger from the Palace, had more the air of a *raconteur*. The production at times lacked inspiration, especially in the choruses, but was always clear-cut and was much assisted by the fine costumes designed by Mr. Edward Scott-Snell (Christ Church).

Mr. Bobbie Howes and Company

"Rapacity, poltroonery, malice, cruelty and hypocrisy, the meanest vices in their most squalid shape are here exhibited. And the London audience gaily laughs," wrote somebody of a play by Mr. Sean O'Casey when it was first produced in London. Except that the laughter is too riotous to be called gay, this would be a good description of the new "play with tunes" at the Saville Theatre. Mr. Bobbie Howes has a mannered sense of the ridiculous, and he plugs it with the persistence of a theme song: *Nothing But The Truth* was just the right peg on which to hang his fatuities. The other members of the cast are successful when they find their own particular grooves of humour, and Mr. Alfred Drayton and Mr. Wylie Watson, at any rate, have enough personality to live down to this standard and still be subtle. In dispensing with a musical comedy chorus the adaptors have done well, for Miss Helen Grey and Miss Polly Luce, as the local Follies Sisters, are far more efficient and attractive than any chorus could be. As Mr. Bobbie Howes is on the stage most of the time, saying straight sentences crooked or rolling on sofas or under office desks, the play is as good as he can make it—and that, within its limits, is very good indeed.

Good Drama

At the Duchess Theatre is drama worth seeing. Eden Phillpotts' *The Secret Woman* is directly emotional and we are spared psychological explanations. Ann Redvers, angular in appearance and temperament, can forgive Anthony his other woman, but she cannot understand his kindly, pagan, view of life. In a moment of overwhelming pain and love and hate she murders him. Ann's conscience gives her no peace; she needs to expiate her sin, and when the police are brought to her door by Salome Westaway, Anthony's "Little Nightingale," Ann is grateful. Salome, youthfully beautiful in love, is ugly in justice, and her future is sorrow. Miss Nancy Price, Miss Peggy Ashcroft and Mr. Malcolm Keen are convincingly human, and the other parts are well acted. *The Secret Woman* has that quality which is found in a surgical job well done without an anaesthetic.

Three Galleries

The recent work of Duncan Grant, Vanessa Bell and Keith Baynes makes an impressive exhibition at Messrs. Agnew's. Possibly owing to the attention which the first two painters have lately given to decoration, their design has gained much in architectural quality, and their colour in variety and freshness. Occasionally a streakiness in Mr. Grant's surfaces gives an unpleasant effect of turbidity, but *The Farm Pond*, *Charleston Farm*, *Oysters* and *The Bathers* show him triumphantly at his highest level; they have a classic spaciousness of conception and a sustained alertness which mark great painting. Mrs. Bell's *Orlando*, *The Farmhouse* and *Amaryllis Lilies* are gracefully profound, the firm basis of their composition made beautifully persuasive by the lucid harmony of colour. *Bath*, *Port Meirion* and *La Rochelle* reveal a new Mr. Keith Baynes, of much greater individuality than before. The rawness has gone, and we are presented with an inwardly lighted, glowing suffusion of hue and a rhythmic quivering vitality. At Messrs. Tooth's, Mr. Elliott Seabrooke's work shows considerable advance in both imagination and accomplishment. The reminiscence of Cézanne is much less obtrusive, and it is the proportion contributed by Mr. Seabrooke which makes the success of *Evening at Beaulieu* and *The Pier*, *Garden at Harlequins*, and *Thames Backwater* even suggest an allegiance changed to Renoir, but here again Mr. Seabrooke's personal vision keeps it appropriately controlled. Frau Jack von Reppert-Bismarck's portraits in oils at Messrs. Knoedler's are a little too forced in subtlety, though delightful decorations. But the water-colours, of madchen without uniform, have a delicacy and sparkle which is of the best *sec* vintage.

Things to see and hear in the coming week—

Saturday, June 25th—
R. Mayer Concert, Central Hall, 11.

Sunday, June 26th—
C. Delisle Burns on "Philosophy and the Arts," Conway Hall, 11.
"Richard of Bordeaux," New.

Monday, June 27th—
"Intimate Relations," Little.
Shakespeare Summer Festival opens at Stratford.

Tuesday, June 28th—
Lord Marley on "Soviet Disarmament Plans," Friends House, 1.20.
"The Flood Came," Faculty.

Thursday, June 30th—
C. E. M. Joad on "That Civilization is Civilized," Caxton Hall, 8.30.
Camargo Ballet Matinee, Savoy.
"Evensong," Queens.
"The Marvellous Boy," Everyman.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

IT was no accident that made the three Brontë sisters, when they commenced author, take as pseudonyms names that could belong to either sex. Currer, Ellis and Acton—thus they declared that, in the arts, a woman had a right to have her work judged entirely on its merits, as though the critics were ignorant of the sex of the author. It is to be hoped that the publication of the fine Shakespeare Head complete edition—an enterprise on which the publisher must be warmly congratulated—will coincide with a greater willingness to read the three sisters' novels and poems without that continual reference to the fact of their sex, which has been the custom from the days of the *Quarterly Reviewer*, who fulminated against Currer as a disgrace to womanhood, to the days of Romer Wilson, who found a truly Laurencian delectation in probing the dark secrets of the fiery and most ill-fated Ellis. At present this new edition consists of the seven novels and tales (11 volumes: Blackwell, £6 17s. 6d.); and I have tried to read in them—a pleasure made easier by the beauty of the edition and the careful reprint of the original texts—as if I had forgotten the Brontë story, and could deduce it only from the books.

It is useless to pretend that one does not guess the authors to be women, and probably young women. Also, one would swear that Currer is certainly a spinster, and could never be other, that Acton probably is, while of the glorious and fulgurant Ellis one would hesitate to predicate anything with positiveness. If I were to look for a sentence which, in a glancing, indirect way, lets the reader a little into the secrets of the authors' lives, I should not go to the often-angered Currer, nor to the tempestuous Ellis, but to the gentler, more resigned Acton. In *Agnes Grey*, you have this meditation of the heroine's:

> Right glad was I to get into the house, and find myself alone once more in my own room. My first impulse was to sink into the chair beside the bed, and laying my head on the pillow, to seek relief in a passionate burst of tears; there was an imperative craving for such an indulgence; but, alas! I must restrain and swallow back my feelings still; there was the bell—the odious bell for the school-room dinner; and I must go down with a calm face, and smile, and laugh, and talk nonsense—yes, and eat too, if possible, as if all was right, and I was just returned from a pleasant walk.

That is written, of course, about Agnes, and her troubles; its application to Acton's troubles and her sisters' is secondary, but seems to me certain. How each of them must have longed for loneliness! How each must have desired to abandon self-restraint, and the dismal routine of that dreary parsonage! How each must have, from unwilling and smiling lips, kept up the bright chatter that was expected by Papa! Of the three authors—I am discussing them alphabetically—it is evident that Acton is the most equable. She comes nearest to being a little housewife, and even the violent scenes in *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* are depicted more as events that destroy the amenities of society than shatter the seclusion and peace of the spirit. Yet this Acton plainly enough shares the high temper of her sisters, and is no less particular about the privileges of the author. In the preface to the second edition of *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall;* she writes:

> All novels are, or should be, written for both men and women to read, and I am at a loss to conceive how a man should permit himself to write anything that would be really disgraceful to a woman, or why a woman should be censured for writing anything that would be proper and becoming for a man.

* * *

Currer Bell, as I have said, seems the definite spinster of the three. There is something of the maiden aunt even in *Jane Eyre*; but the same quality is far more distinct, and more old-maidish in *Shirley*. It may be unfair thus to label certain attractive and not so attractive characteristics; but there would, I think, be general agreement that, in the Victorian age at any rate, maternal disapproval was apt to be less acidulated, though possibly more robust, than the aunt's disapprobation. Currer Bell disapproves like a maiden aunt; and she jokes like a maiden aunt. Here I enjoy her. The maiden aunt was never, in those days, taken in by masculine airs of superiority; she had won her exemption from that worship by her exemption from marriage; and if she found a man ridiculous, she was at liberty to say so. Hence you get that excellent conversation-piece, in *Shirley*, of the three curates, the fine, broad painting of the passage in which Currer Bell displays them, as it were, in action:

> Season and weather make no difference; with unintelligible zeal they dare snow and hail, wind and rain, mire and dust, to go and dine, or drink tea, or sup with each other. What attracts them, it would be difficult to say. It is not friendship; for whenever they meet they quarrel. It is not religion; the thing is never named amongst them; theology they may discuss occasionally, but piety—never. It is not the love of eating and drinking; each might have as good a joint and pudding, tea as potent, and toast as succulent, at his own lodgings, as is served to him at his brother's. Mrs. Gale, Mrs. Hogg, and Mrs. Whipp—their respective landladies—affirm that "it is just for nought else but to give folk trouble." By "folk," the good ladies, of course, mean themselves, for indeed they are kept in a continual "fry" by this system of mutual invasion.

There is much more in Currer, of course, than humour—the anger and pity of *Jane Eyre*, the agony of *Villette*, the social zeal of *Shirley* are indeed far more notable—but humour is her distinctive mark, as tender resignation is Acton's, and as—what is the distinction of Ellis, who wrote *Wuthering Heights*?

* * *

Well, Ellis Bell is a woman who could recognise hell when she saw it. It is not a common gift, that; though less rare among English poets, perhaps, than those of any other race. Reading *Wuthering Heights*, it is of Dante one thinks, of Villon, of Webster. Ellis Bell has no use for paste or prettiness . . . there are no clanking chains in her book of terrors, but only the tempest, and the driven snow, and the crisp sound of tumbled leaves, and man's evil will. Even in the incident after Linton's burial the horror is spiritual, not told to raise the hair, or chill the blood, but to put into one's very soul a fear of the inordinate power of those who worshipped evil. Is there any imaginative book, outside Shakespeare's plays, which so convinces one that there are men who will and work evil? Beside the genuine terror of this story, the theatrical wickedness of Vathek seems a pusillanimous business, not more convincing than the sins of Southey's great Kehama. What the reader feels in *Wuthering Heights* is a passionate conviction that, at any rate for people of ardent natures and fiery tempers, the life of the body is a fatal bar to unity. We do not know what it was which made Ellis Bell feel and express that with such dreadful power. That it was her own conviction, whether of dramatic mood or some deeper necessity, seems incontrovertible. When Heathcliffe expresses it, his words take on that overtone which one hears when dramatic characters speak the maker's thoughts:

> "She has disturbed me, night and day, through eighteen years—incessantly—remorselessly—till yesternight—and yesternight, I was tranquil. I dreamt I was sleeping the last sleep, by that sleeper, with my heart stopped, and my cheek frozen against her." "And if she had been dissolved into earth, or worse, what would you have dreamt of them?" I said.
>
> "Of dissolving with her and being more happy still!" he answered.

It is Ellis Bell speaking. There has been much discussion whether Heathcliffe had an original, whether he was Branwell or another: it is possible, it seems, that Branwell helped Ellis with her story. He may have, though I doubt it. Of this I am sure. When Ellis Bell is showing Heathcliffe at his darkest, his most desperate, his most profoundly arrogant, it is from and of her own tormented and courageous heart that she is writing. RICHARD SUNNE.

"FASHIONED SO SLENDERLY . . ."

The True Woman. By C. K. MUNRO. Gerald Howe. 6s.

Woman, Theme and Variations. By A. CORBETT-SMITH. Noel Douglas. 8s. 6d.

Mr. Corbett-Smith wants to Understand Woman to Love Her Better, it seems; Mr. Munro wants to Understand Her to Love Her Less.

I cannot imagine who reads this kind of book—who, among all the busy living people I see about me, has time to turn from living friends and enemies to wrestle with The Problem of Woman. I suppose all the writers of Books about Woman read one another's books; by now they must amount to quite a sizeable public. Mr. Munro in particular gives every sign of having read other people's books about other people, instead of bothering to know *people*. My theory about his book is that the reading of other men's books about the Woman Problem fired him with the appalling realisation that he was the only Clever Man left in England who had not yet shied his coconut at the Aunt Sally called Woman. So here he comes running up with his coconut—a little late—a little breathless—hoping we shall not notice that his coconut is a little stale. To freshen it, he has wrapped it in a wrapping of Pett-Ridgesque roguishness, so that if it hits a harmless spectator in the eye and raises a bruise he can say, "Oh never mind, I was only in fun"—and if it raises nothing but a laugh, he can say, "Many a true word is spoken in jest." And so he throws his coconut, bless his heart, side by side with the other smart boys. Bang—bang—bang—echoes poor Aunt Sally, and the smart boys enjoy the fun so much that they never look round to see the rest of the fair—the men and women on the swings and the roundabouts—the dancing on the green—the circus riders—the fat woman—the living skeleton—the men and women running from show to show—taking the kicks and the halfpence involved in being alive.

Why do we not write books about the Bitch, the Mare, the Guinea-sow? Because in the animal world there is scarcely anything to write about the Bitch, the Mare and the Guinea-sow that does not also apply to the Dog, the Horse and the Guinea-pig. Dog and Bitch alike are governed by an ancient tradition, and to this tradition they react—not as dog and bitch, but as individual canine animals. The dog begets puppies, the bitch bears them, but apart from this there is no particular difference—no question of the Bitch's Sphere being the Kennel—no Eternal Mystery of Bitchhood—no Dogs-must-work-and-Bitches-must-weep business—no reverence owed or demanded between bitch and dog—in a word, no Bitch Problem. Tradition, by keeping both dog and bitch in a kindly and servile bondage for thousands of generations, has moulded them into a certain canine pattern *vis-à-vis* human beings. Apart from this pattern, which we made ourselves, *we do not know what dogs are like*—nor can we possibly know, because we only see them when we are there to see them, as it were. If we troubled ourselves to state the Dog Problem, we could only discuss the *tradition* that has adapted the Outer Dog to our convenience. The Problem, therefore, wouldn't be very interesting.

Tradition has, in the same way, moulded the Outer Human Being—but, being a tradition founded in the first instance on physical strength and primitive conditions, it has distinguished between the sexes. The Outer Woman has been formed to one pattern, and the Outer Man to another. No man knows what women are like; no woman knows what men are like, for neither man nor woman has yet succeeded in being born outside the reach of tradition; nobody has ever yet succeeded in knowing a man or woman when that man or woman was entirely alone.

Neither Mr. Munro nor Mr. Corbett-Smith, of course, has the slightest idea what women are like when they are entirely alone—or what women are like when they are with other women. But both these naive inquirers go farther than simply Not Knowing what women are like—they actually do not believe that women exist, except in relation to men. Mr. Corbett-Smith believes that Woman exists as a thing looked at by men (and looked at with considerable pleasure); Mr. Munro believes that she exists as a thing read about and written about by men (and read and written about with considerable rancour). *Woman when Man isn't there* is a contradiction in terms, or, rather, any woman who can by an effort of the male imagination be conceived as existing when men are not there—is easily disposed of; she is No True Woman. Heads I win, Tails you lose.

So these two sit down and write two books about tradition—which they miscall The Woman Problem. Here is the True Woman, illustrated by Mr. Munro:

> Suppose a woman wants a new dress and her husband doesn't want her to have it, thinking she has spent quite enough already. . . . In order to run the house, the woman must have an allowance. This, or some of it, she spends on the new dress. She then, at an appropriate moment, says to her husband: "Can I have some more money, please?"
>
> "But you've had your allowance."
>
> "I know, but I've spent all that."
>
> "How?"
>
> "I had to get that frock."
>
> "Why?"

Here speaks a Grand Old Tradition, but here, certainly, does *not* speak the True Woman. Nobody—least of all Mr. Munro—knows what real women would say if, for several thousand years, tradition had sanctioned the payment to women of real wages for real work.

Mr. Corbett-Smith is much kinder than Mr. Munro. At one point he recommends a "healthy, normal man" "in need of an hour's invigorating pick-me-up" to visit a girls' school on a day of display.

> He will see them fencing and dancing and swimming and diving with a purity of movement, an effortless grace, a vernal joy and pride of life that recreate for all who behold them the Golden Age of Homer. And, twin with this radiance of body, he will observe radiance of the spirit. . . . Intellectual honesty is there, poise, self-reliance, and a fearless striving after the facts of life, but—since we are human, social animals—our delight is in the graceful mode of intercourse, the pretty manners, the nice conduct of a teacup or cream bun, the courteous touch of deference to a guest, the laughing pride of the hostess in showing us round "her" school, the gallant talk of the latest novel, play, or speedboat contest, and the surprised and grateful acceptance of a box of chocolate peppermints for nibbling after "lights out."

This is indeed disarming! I can only hope that Mr. Munro will read that bit. Mr. Corbett-Smith goes on throughout the book being delighted. He throws puff-balls at the Aunt Sally—not coconuts. Of course, being, as he says, a human, social animal, he reserves throughout his real delight for the "graceful mode of intercourse"; he is emphatically less delighted with that aspect of women that does not face men.

> Enid tosses her head in defiance. She is adopted as prospective member for a Parliamentary constituency. Duly returned, she still forges ahead. She wins to influential position and high rank in her Party. Oh yes, Enid has "made good," as the world counts it. But in her heart, Enid knows that she has failed. Failed utterly.

I suppose I shall have to write a book about Man. I shall write lovely things about Man, modelled on Mr. Corbett-Smith's work—at least about the men who open doors prettily for women.

"BP"
PLUS
Plus what?
Plus a little something some others haven't got

and give them chocolates and flowers, and are silent when women wish to talk—behave, in fact, exactly as tradition demands that men should behave *when women are there*. Any suggestion that men exist pleasantly *when women aren't there*—in their clubs, for instance (nasty stuffy places)—or in their offices, where they spend their days (if I am informed rightly by other women) telling one another dirty stories, I shall, of course, pass over irritably. Men are quite horrid when women aren't there—but that doesn't really matter—does it, Mr. Munro?—because the *true man's* real existence is in women's presence. If a man isn't presenting boxes of chocolate or opening doors—he isn't a *true man* (as far as women are concerned). Funny what a lot of false men and false women there seem to be about. As for those men who, in women's presence, thwart women—talk hour by hour, for instance, about last Saturday's golf match, hole by hole, or fall asleep sitting on the newspaper, or insist on keeping up their club subscription instead of saving for the children's summer holiday—I shall write exceedingly harshly about them—calling attention to the fact that these faults are both typical of *true men* and also highly displeasing to women. I shall envisage the very silliest man I know, cackling about golf or bridge in the presence of the most reasonable woman I know; I shall portray her listening with a patient, intelligent smile to the cackle, waiting for silence in order that she may compose an Epochmaking Speech on a World Problem. This truly just contrast shall be the keynote of my book.

Yes, I can see it coming; I shall certainly not be able to avoid writing a book on the Man Problem. But sometimes I wonder whether it will be a very interesting book.

STELLA BENSON.

A LIBERAL IRISH STATESMAN

The Life of John Redmond. By DENIS GWYNN. Harrap. 25s.

Mr. Denis Gwynn is at once *in medias res*, i.e., Anglo-Irish politics. This is as it should be, for the subject of his biography, the late John Redmond, was, as someone remarked of him quite early in his career, "a politician first, a politician second, a politician third, and as an individual entity unknown to any except his intimates." If Redmond's character is to be studied, it must be through his political action. His private life was without remarkable incident, and his interests, outside of Parliament, were confined to the society of a few friends, the reading of the classics and the moors of Wicklow. Mr. Gwynn does, however, give us a short but interesting description of the environment which produced this leader of the Irish race. The Redmonds in the nineteenth century were prosperous merchants and bankers in Wexford, descendants of expropriated Catholic landowners of Penal times, and themselves tending, as is the way with such families in Ireland, to go back to the land and pursue the avocations of the Irish country gentlemen. Business never holds an Irish Catholic family for long. But the Redmonds were also attracted to politics; John Redmond's father and his grand-uncle were both M.P.s, moderate advocates of Irish claims.

The Redmonds were good Catholics, but of the old Irish "Liberal" rather than the new tradition. John Redmond would certainly have been horrified by some of the politico-religious developments of the Free State. In this connection, one may say, it is a pity that Mr. Gwynn has not devoted some space to the relations between the Irish Bishops and Redmond's party. He is all but silent on the "clerical question," which had more to do with the overthrow of the parliamentary party and the success of Sinn Fein than has been generally noted. Odd that the Church should have gone with the mob! But generally in this book Mr. Gwynn lays the stress on Anglo-Irish parliamentary politics rather than on Irish conditions, no doubt for good reasons. Though Redmond entered public life as far back as 1880, and became Irish leader at the beginning of this century, almost two-thirds of Mr. Gwynn's narrative is occupied with the events between 1910 and 1918, that is with the period opening with Redmond's "dictation" of the Parliament Act, which naturally is of most interest to English readers, as it was then that Irish action impinged on their own affairs.

By 1910 Redmond was already out of contact with Irish feeling, which had become critical of the notion that Irish freedom could be realised through manœuvres in the House of Commons. Of Sinn Fein demagogy Redmond was indignantly contemptuous; but he had inclinations towards a conservative approach to Home Rule by mutual concessions among Irishmen themselves. Inclinations which were discouraged by his chief (and loyal) adviser, John Dillon, who could conceive of Home Rule only in terms of a victory of the parliamentary party, which must never compromise its claim to be the sole authentic voice of Irish Nationalism. Redmond's private notes, reproduced by Mr. Gwynn, for the All-Ireland Convention of 1917, are in this relation somewhat tragic:

> I see in this alliance with the Southern Unionists a certain hope of success.
>
> I ask no one to give up anything except on the understanding that Government agrees.

The Irish party of Parnell's foundation was then on the verge of dissolution.

Mr. Denis Gwynn, however, takes the view, for which there is much to be said, that Redmond's failure was due to English circumstance over which he had little or no control. How could this good Liberal have anticipated in 1910 that a reckless "activism" was about to penetrate British institutions themselves and upset every calculation of the constitutional agitator? Redmond's private papers, to which Mr. Gwynn has had access, contain no sensational revelations, except possibly that of Redmond's own extreme guilelessness; but the confessions of the field-marshals and Tory statesmen who encouraged physical force in Ulster and used the Army to kill Asquith's Home Rule Bill, have left nothing to be desired in the points of thoroughness and candour, and Mr. Gwynn quotes freely and effectively from these.

J. M. HONE.

AFTER GENJI'S DEATH

The Lady of the Boat. By LADY MURASAKI. Translated from the Japanese by ARTHUR WALEY. Allen and Unwin. 10s. 6d.

If the fifth and penultimate volume of *The Tale of Genji*, which has just appeared in Mr. Waley's brilliant version, is less exhilarating than some of its immediate predecessors, the fault is not the translator's but the novelist's. Prince Genji has been dead for several years and minor characters now occupy the stage, descendants real or putative of the great man, and by comparison vapourish and unreal. Interest chiefly centres round two persons; there is Niou, Genji's grandson, an Imperial princeling, aged fourteen when the story opens, and there is Kaoru, a high dignitary of the court, usually supposed to be Genji's son.

As it happens, he is the son of a younger rival. Genji, a precocious exquisite about the court, had deceived his own father, the old Emperor, and he himself, in his disappointed middle age, had been cuckolded by the son of his great friend. Such is the boomerang twist of human affairs, such—to use a more fitting Buddhist simile—the inevitably circular movement of the wheel of fate. That movement, with all it entails of human suffering, pervades the novelist's conception of her work. One could not claim for Lady Murasaki that she was either an adept in dramatic construction or a "psychological novelist" in the modern sense. Her psychology was largely borrowed from her environment and, as a result, assumed the colour of Buddhist thought. Murasaki might be compared to Jane Austen, since it was her main strength to abide by existing values.

At the time when the first volumes of the series dawned on delighted English readers as a revelation of a new and marvellous world, critics, not unnaturally though perhaps unfortunately, spoke of Murasaki's "modern" outlook. Since then the appearance of later volumes and of the historical preface contributed by Mr. Waley to his translation of Sei Shōnagon's *Pillow-Book* have helped us to a more balanced point of view. Murasaki is no less admirable than in the beginning—indeed, more so now that she occupies her right place.

We see her as the product of her age, the Heian period, that ephemeral and lovely growth that sprang up at the touch of foreign influences from the obscurity of primitive Japan. Its soil was luxuriant but somewhat shallow. Every reader who has glanced at *The Tale of Genji* must have carried away from some enchanting line or paragraph the impression of a strangely sheltered world where æstheticism flourished and ran riot.

DENT

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Incense, dress, poetical composition, the interminable game of literary repartee—its denizens lived a curious twilit life in which the spirit and the flesh might both intrude, but in which the love of elegance was stronger than all else. Prince Genji was its arbiter and great exponent, the dandy whose personal charm was so compulsive and whose grace and sense of style were so bewildering that even the peasants who watched him from afar off wept copiously when he danced his celebrated *pas seul*.

They crouched on the utmost fringes of the audience; one of the characteristics that make Murasaki's tale seem so remote in spite of its abounding fascination is her complete ignorance of any world outside the court, the enchanted circle of privilege and power. Shopkeepers and the like do not exist; peasants, should they cross the pages of her story, are mere grotesques, pitiable oddities, stray Calibans. . . . Yet, within this circle, how clear her vision is! She evokes magically, albeit slowly, the situation and mood of her protagonists; Kaoru, the busy important official vexed by vague sentimental yearnings which take him to the delapidated country house inhabited by the lonely daughters of old Prince Hachi; Niou who also wishes to make their acquaintance but finds it difficult to overcome their reserve. . . .

Kaoru has thoughts of turning monk. This volume more plainly than any of its fellows illustrates the religious background of the Heian temperament, the fervid, and sometimes gloomy, preoccupation of these worldings with the idea of the life to come, the desire which they so frequently experienced of escaping into the ideal calm of a monastic career. Maybe they had a premonition of their end. Heian culture was too artificial to last long, and represented too small a fraction of the Empire. In the civil wars which swept across Japan the whole beautiful fabric was brought low.

Meanwhile we can enjoy Murasaki. None of these later characters may be very clear-cut, but each of them, within its own limits, is justly observed. And then there is the exquisite landscape setting. We hear the swollen river which roars behind the manor-house and see the curling wreaths of mist which trail in the garden. A light glimmers; a paper window is thrust back; and a belated courtier creeps out from some stolen *rendezvous*. Or we watch the old Prince, on his last journey to the temple, painfully ascending the wintry hillside among the snow-drifts.

SEVENTY YEARS AGO

The Eighteen-Sixties. Essays by Fellows of the Royal Society of Literature. Edited by JOHN DRINKWATER. Cambridge University Press. 12s. 6d.

The singularly interesting task of surveying the previous century decade by decade was begun in 1929 by certain Fellows of the Royal Society of Literature. The plan had its origin, Mr. Drinkwater tells us, in a suggestion of Mr. Granville-Barker's, and the first volume, on the Eighteen-Seventies, was edited by him. This was followed last year by a volume on the 'Eighties, edited by Mr. Walter de la Mare; and now we have a third volume, edited by Mr. John Drinkwater, and devoted to the 'Sixties. Obviously certain decades lend themselves more than others to such a treatment. In the 'Nineties, for instance, there was a definite literary and artistic movement, which found its most concentrated expression in *The Yellow Book* and *The Savoy*. A volume on the 'Nineties, one would imagine, must contain a chapter dealing with these periodicals. But the 'Sixties also saw a definite artistic movement, and the odd thing is that in the nine essays before me there is not so much as an allusion to it. One of the most characteristic products of the 'Sixties was the illustrated gift-book. Volumes like *A Round of Days*, *Touches of Nature*, and Millais's *Parables of Our Lord* had never been produced before and are hardly likely to be produced again. The same might be said of that remarkable magazine *Once a Week*. *Once a Week* is as typical of the 'Sixties as *The Yellow Book* is of the 'Nineties, and it is vastly more interesting. *The Yellow Book* for its illustrations depended largely on a single artist, Beardsley, but *Once a Week* could count upon the work of every black-and-white artist of the first rank who was then drawing. Surely it is a rather serious omission, in a survey of "the golden age of illustration," completely to ignore illustration. Even in his essay on *Punch* Mr. C. L. Graves is much more concerned with politics than with the genius of Charles Keene. *Punch's* literary interest also is lightly passed over. Yet it was in *Punch's* columns, in the mid-Sixties, that F. C. Burnand's novel *Happy Thoughts* first appeared, and nothing could be more of its time than this delightful and neglected masterpiece. Burnand appears, it is true, in Mr. Granville-Barker's charming paper *Exit Planché—Enter Gilbert*, but Burnand writing burlesques for the stage is Burnand at his worst, Burnand the rather boring buffoon and pun-maker: there is not a single pun, I think, in *Happy Thoughts*.

Of all these essays, the longest and best is Mr. de la Mare's on *The Early Novels of Wilkie Collins*. I myself should have thought Le Fanu, who comes so exactly into the period, all his important work being written between 1860 and 1870, more Mr. de la Mare's novelist than Collins, because Le Fanu gets his effects by the creation of atmosphere rather than by ingenuity of plot, though no plot could be more ingenious than that of *Checkmate*. Still, Wilkie Collins gets an atmosphere too, though it is not one shot through by disquieting gleams from the supernatural. Collins touches no secret spring in the imagination, his words never suggest more than they actually say, almost his only poetry is in his titles, mysteriously fascinating and evocative as some of them are—*The Fallen Leaves*, *The Two Destinies*, *The Frozen Deep*. But that is a personal opinion: a novel, like everything else, is subject to the law of relativity, and the novels of Collins have aroused in Mr. de la Mare a good deal more than "the curiosity to get an answer to a riddle":

> Indeed, in these novels, however gay and radiant the English sunshine may be, however clear the bird song and spring-like the young women in their muslins and their shawls; somewhere—as a sidling glance over the shoulder will prove—there waits a hearse, with its mutes and its mourners and its swish-tailed horses; and night is coming on! But it is not *the* night. Towards *Finis* there will come a call for candles; or, possibly, gas; and all will be well . . Since he cannot be content with the ordinary in life, it must be given the appearance of the strange, the bizarre. He may cite reasons for introducing the deaf-mute, Madonna, into *Hide and Seek*, but such reasons alone would hardly account for the presence of no fewer than three blind characters in his earlier novels. And it is not only unusual physical conditions that attract him, but the spiritually cowed and oppressed, the victims of strange and obscure obsessions, forlorn souls burdened with "secrets," cringing wrecks of humanity. The haunted and the less than sane frequent his pages. What, then—if we are so inclined—engrosses us in his fiction is in much the curiosity to get an answer to a riddle, but, in still more, the desire to remain under his spell.

It is tempting to dwell on Mr. de la Mare's essay, because, incidentally, it touches on several fascinating problems one would like to discuss—such as the distinction between plot and story, or the view that "of all human beings young men perhaps are the most difficult in fiction to bring to life." In Sir John Fortescue's appreciation of Whyte-Melville questions of technique naturally do not arise. With Whyte-Melville, as Henry James would have said, all *that*—everything concerning the science and the art of fiction—is virgin snow. Indeed, Sir John frankly admits that he was "less a novelist than a country gentleman who wrote novels." The essay, at any rate, is less a critical study than a lament for a vanished phase of country society, but, unlike the editor, I should not describe it as "tender." Whyte-Melville "is the only novelist of his time, or since, who writes with conviction about ladies and gentlemen, for he was one of the few writers who knew them by heart as being one of themselves." It is a surprising and alienating remark, and the allusion is not merely to sporting fiction. Yet even there, what of the brilliant work of E. Œ. Somerville and Martin Ross, which certainly is written as much from the inside as anything of Whyte-Melville's?

The only "discovery" in the book is Mr. Drinkwater's discovery of Eneas Sweetland Dallas, who in 1866 published "a highly distinguished contribution to English poetic criticism" entitled *The Gay Science*. On the other hand, I must confess that the poems of Sir Henry Taylor, reviewed here by Mr. Abercrombie, were to me equally unknown. Mr. Humbert Wolfe contributes an ingenious study of Arthur Hugh Clough, "a great natural satirist and story-teller smothered not by his own doubts but by the doubts thrust upon him by his friends," and Dr. Boas writes with his customary learning and distinction on *Historians in the 'Sixties*. Finally, Sir Oliver Lodge brings the survey to a close with a paper on *Science in the 'Sixties*. The whole book is interesting, especially those chapters of it which raise points one would like to argue. It is worthy of its predecessors in a series one trusts will not end here.

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THE END OF A DYNASTY

The Last Medici. By HAROLD ACTON. Faber and Faber. 18s.

Inevitably it seems, the closing chapters of any great family's career must be charged with tragedy or, at the least, with bathos. The vitality decays, the ambition, after realising power, wealth, influence, all man's most soaring dreams of secular success, turns into aimless paths, matrimonial alliances with royal blood, the right to remain covered in the presence of Spain's most Catholic Majesty. And as the field from which the noble house may draw fresh blood narrows and restricts itself, positive evils creep in, mental instability, inheritable diseases, and, at the last, sterility. The superiority of intellect and physique which originally created the family's position has gone; the position remains, dependent now on heredity instead of character. And the generations cling to their position all the more greedily because they have come to regard it as a right, because they would be lost without it, even when they seldom know what to do with it. But the end must come, fiercely or gently, and for the Medici it came with an astounding inevitability. They ceased to be. Brandano's prophecy was only twenty-seven years out: in 1743 instead of 1716 "Tutti sani, non piu Medici." But the real Medici had died out long before. Lorenzo the Magnificent would not have recognised his latest descendants.

In an age of great names, of startling changes in fortune, when Palcologues were falling like leaves in autumn and obscure condottiere manœuvring their way to power, the Medici made a reputation which, even then, was remarkable. Their glory was more dazzling, their power more enduring because of the peculiar range of gifts that they combined; political prudence with personal ambition, commercial sagacity with artistic extravagance. They knew how to acquire power and how to use it, and they knew real power from its phantasm, the pursuit of empty titles, of territories conquered by the sword and retained, at vast expense, from day to day by the sword and by oppression. Ambition never became a fever with the great Medici, merely an instrument in the art of living. Their contemporaries respected them, and to their subjects they brought so much increase of wealth, trade, and prestige that their tyranny was gilded. So, blessed by the Graces and the Muses, and by Mercury protector of thieves and merchants, they soared to giddy heights and were at last admitted to the nobility of Europe and acclaimed Archdukes: the subtle vengeance of the powers that be for the power that makes itself, the transference from the boundless sphere of personality to the bounded and ever-narrowing sphere of princes and heredity, with all its attendant ills. One by one the Medici shed their promise and their gifts, retaining longest of all their love of the arts, a pleasant and redeeming trait, but not, as our people found under Charles I, an essential feature of the wise prince.

Mr. Acton's especial little tragi-comedy involves five principals, the devout Cosimo III, his French wife, half-sister of the *Grande Mademoiselle* and with more than half a share of Mademoiselle's intransigency, and their three off-springs, Ferdinando, Gian-Gastone, and Anna-Maria. The last remains a very shadowy figure, pious and proud, blighted by her husband with a fell disease which she would have concealed by avoiding the embalming usual in so precious a family had not her wishes been interpreted "as being given out of modesty only, and so not complied with." Poor Anna-Maria, her wishes had never received much attention, but to this grim ghost, alone of all the five, posterity owes a debt. For it was her will that left to the succeeding Dukes of Lorraine the art treasures collected by successive Medici on condition that they remained at Florence and that they should be open to the public of all nations.

Of the others, Ferdinando sinks early under the cloud of "manly disorders" contracted in Venice, while Gian-Gastone, the most sympathetic of them all, remains a half-solved enigma, the victim of contending circumstances. Only Cosimo and Marguerite-Louise, his wife, emerge into full daylight, the latter by the sheer force of her personality, the former by the interest, tinged with indignation, he has managed to arouse in his biographer. For Mr. Acton is an odd historian. Personalities entrance him most, but superficial ones; odd vices, exotic tastes, tendencies which are not accounted for and do not always wholly explain themselves. We are left to guess at much which another more curious writer would have delighted to unravel. Mr. Acton lacks the spiritual patience to decipher the spirit. He is blind to the *nouveau réel*, to borrow a phrase from P. J. Jouve, "deeper and more mysterious than that in which we are supposed to live." This is a pity, for the last of the Medici were deep, mysterious problems from an elucidation of which we might have learned much about the nature of princes and of mankind. At the same time, Mr. Acton has read widely, and knows in detail the diplomatic whirlpools through which his characters moved, intimately but powerless, pawns which the greater powers played with at will. His pages are crammed with secret agreements and questions of heredity, the interest of which is dead, if ever it existed outside that narrow circle which Madame de Lafayette used to call, arrogantly, *le monde*.

The result is that a very promising tragedy becomes an aimless and far too lengthy debacle. Cosimo prays and collects anatomical but saintly oddities. His children marry and are miserable, but beget no children. His wife rebels, protests, scandalises the courts of Europe, and dies, ineffectually irritating to the last. The Medici are gone and few regret them, but they take their secrets with them to the grave, leaving us dissatisfied, sympathetic but not purged. Too detailed knowledge may be a dangerous thing. Familiarity with the diplomacy of nations has hypnotised Mr. Acton into the assumption that what seemed important to Cosimo and his fellow-princes is worthy of recording. The true importance of the last Medici slips through his many pages unexplained.

FLORA GRIERSON.

A CERTAIN LIVELINESS

Dream of Destiny and Venus Rising from the Sea. By ARNOLD BENNETT. Cassell. 7s. 6d.

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Before the Fact. By FRANCIS ILES. Gollancz. 7s. 6d.

Sea-Green Grocer. By JASPER POWER. Grayson. 7s. 6d.

Plummer's Cut. By BASIL MAINE. Harmsworth. 7s. 6d.

"Time was," as Gilbert's curate forgot to sing, "when sermons ev'n were entertaining; time was when tracts would jump like any frog. But in the modern tales it's always raining; and no one speaks or smiles, save through a fog." Some of us are still shameless in preferring a novel to be entertaining; and the fact that we share this taste with the greatest novelist does not distress us in the least. So here for the holidays are ten books, none of which, except perhaps *Plummer's Cut*, has any other immediate purpose than to please. They have other results—Miss Delafield, for instance, is one of the acutest women now writing, continuously can it be said of her—*virum acu tetigisti*. Often the man does not know it, for she is apt to attack too often men who wear brogues all over, and are unpuncturable. In this story of early Edwardian times her enemy is custom, not specifically masculine—the deadly custom which said to all girls, first, You must marry, then, You must marry before Maud, and then, I should take him, my dear, it's your sixth (or tenth) season. And the girl took him: and another story began. Miss Delafield has an astonishing power of recreating that past world of formal calls, formal dinner-parties, and great parties, of the days when Victorianism was passing, and London took on the *panache* of the Regency, but had not the vigorous vitality that marked the world of George IV. This is one of her most serious novels, a novel to make any girl glad that she was not young when, if men did not propose, neither God nor any other power seemed really to dispose. Arnold Bennett's romanticism shines and is buoyant in this last book—*Dream of Destiny* is an unfinished fragment of a novel that would have had a rare lightness and gaiety, and the tale of Venus is a charming variant on the age-old Cinderella motif. Its scene is that oddly unreal real world of the footlights and the dressing-rooms which never lost its fascination for Bennett. Miss Royde-Smith knows that things, while they are not what they seem, may as easily be supernatural as

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abnormal. The obverse of the image for her is not perverse; a door may open, not on Freudian skeletons, but on dreams of beauty. Her short stories are lovely and lucid, and show a pleasantly sensible aspect of the supersensuous. What a treat is Mr. Booth Tarkington's America! How consummately he enjoys his own enjoyment, and rollicks in his unscrupulous power to please! How cross this book will make the young people who cannot distinguish between Euclid and Aesop . . . but who disapprove of Aesop. Mr. Tarkington is a genuine fabulist and in the loosely made story of a Western family in a fashionable Eastern resort—Manchester, say, at Frinton-on-Sea—he gives us that shrewd criticism of the high-brow and the knock-kneed which naturally aggravates them.

It is a more serious, fundamentally more serious world that we enter with Chester-Belloc and with Carl Zuckmayer. Mr. Belloc has never done better than this story of corruption in English politics in 1960—so strangely like the world of the Marconi case. (Did he, by the way, consult his consummate illustrator—G. K. C. is splendid in his drawings—before he wrote this? For all the chief Cabinet officials are old women—and they are all exactly like the present Cabinet: surely a nasty knock for an anti-feminist.) *The Postmaster-General* is prodigious fun. And, lest we should boast of our insular glory, here is Carl Zuckmayer's play on the actual, famous Köpenick scandal. An episodic, genial, plebeian kind of drama, full of good German humour and solemn gratulations, excellently translated. What it all led to, that dumb Prussian devotion to dumb Prussian discipline, we can see in Mr. Waugh's book about post-war conditions. It is a pleasantly naive book, this, a mixture of reminiscence, fiction and history. The author's capacity for hero worship makes him an ardent admirer of Mr. Gerhardi, Mr. Hugh Kingsmill and one Holms who had a passionate devotion to his own red hair. Mr. Waugh writes sympathetically about his friends; but he is a little too much of a cricketer for his ideas to be taken seriously. Mr. Iles is out to make us curdle. We curdled. This story of a dull woman who marries a man with charm and nothing else—no income, no honour, no decency, no kindness, no intelligence, only low cunning—is a dreadfully fascinating affair. The picture of apprehension, when the wife knows her charmer has decided to kill her, is scarcely tolerable. A very successful thriller. We cannot, alas! like Mr. Power's grocer. He seems to us a lamentably inferior imitation of Mr. Wells's earlier heroes—sometimes his life, after being shanghaied, is noisily entertaining; but not often. *Plummer's Cut* is a story of a priest who cannot learn his craft. He fails to adopt that consummate impersonality which priestcraft demands; he becomes desperately involved in the love-affair of one parishioner, and the end of Mr. Maine's book is tragic. It is a novel, this, of unusual sympathy and a quick, ardent imagination. Mr. Maine is worth watching.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

Poems of G. M. Hopkins. Oxford Univ. Press. 7s. 6d.

In the class-room of the future there will be a text framed and hung over the head of the master, "Beware of critics," to which the pupils will silently point when at the end of an hour's monologue they find that their master has been talking, not about Shakespeare, not about Dryden or Shelley, but about himself. And in a higher form, written in even larger letters, will be another notice: "Criticism is the attempt to substitute taste for genius—the taste of the critic for the genius of the poet"; and in the light of that candour the schoolboys of the future may be allowed to walk their own ways.

An instance of grave critical insufficiency is the harm done to a poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, even by critics whose intention has been to recommend him. Hopkins was born in 1844 and died in 1889. His first critic, Robert Bridges, recognised Hopkins as a fine poet and proved his admiration by keeping his poems in cold storage for thirty years, releasing at last, in 1918, a selection of Hopkins's poetry, which was enlarged twelve years later by another editor. He was thus given a false position from the start. Between 1918 and 1932 these criticisms were made of Hopkins: (1) that he was the most difficult English poet, in whom religion stifled art (I. A. Richards); (2) that he was difficult and at times incomprehensible, and that wilfulness and a "naked encounter between sensualism and asceticism" spoilt much of his best work (Robert Bridges); (3) that he was a pseudo-Shelley whose "central point of departure" was the *Ode to the Skylark* (J. Middleton Murry); (4) that Hopkins was on the one hand fundamentally Miltonic, and on the other fundamentally Shakespearean (various writers; two groups), and (5) that he was a post-war poet, the leader of a new school of poets. The last view is popular with anthologists.

Such a jumble of nonsense would seem to me incredible if I had not read it with my own eyes. Where did Mr. Murry find his skylark poet? Hopkins wrote two sonnets on the skylark, neither of which has any connection with Shelley beyond subject-matter. Two of his longest poems describe shipwreck: perhaps then Hopkins is repeating *The Wreck of the Hesperus*? The argument whether Hopkins is Miltonic or Shakespearean has more interest because he was actually influenced by both; but he was also influenced by Swinburne and the author of *Beowulf*: why not admit that Hopkins is fundamentally himself? The criticisms of Bridges and of Mr. I. A. Richards are worth answering. But there are two facts about Hopkins—that he was a Victorian in style, outlook and feeling, and that he was a Catholic priest who wrote poetry to the glory of God—these facts have been recognised by no critic whom I can trace.

The most important event in Hopkins's life was his conversion in 1866, at the age of twenty-two. Till then he had been, on the surface at least, another Swinburne, precocious, sensitive, less diffused, more meticulous, but sowing his sweet pastoral oats and slipping back through sunsets and books of Cavalier verse into Greek mythology. He began by imitating Keats, but afterwards disliked what he called the unmanly qualities in Keats's character, and wrote in a letter to Coventry Patmore:

> It appears that he said something like "O for a life of impressions rather than thoughts." . . . His contemporaries, as Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, and even Leigh Hunt, right or wrong, still concerned themselves with great causes, as liberty and religion; but he lived in mythology and fairyland, the life of a dreamer: nevertheless I feel and see in him the beginnings of something opposite to this. . . .

(Is not that the very accent of a Victorian?) From an early age he had felt and seen "the beginnings of something opposite to this" in *himself*. At the age of twelve, he described a schoolfellow in his diary as "a kaleidoscopic, parti-coloured, harlequinesque, thaumotropic being": a note not heard in his poetry till twenty years later. A vein of resistance ran counter to the delights of the poet's boyhood, which was otherwise Swinburnian, and found outlet in an occasional prank like fasting or abstention from drinking liquids. His artistic sensibilities, even as a child, were so various that, while he allowed them to develop, his instinct hardened against submission to them.

That brings me to the third fact which critics have overlooked: Hopkins was in sensibility not only a poet but a musician and a painter. This can be seen plainly enough in his poetry. He was fond at different times of composing songs and fugues, and his skill as a painter was sufficient for his biographer to record that "had his career not been shaped by other incidents he would undoubtedly have adopted painting as a profession." Some degree of ambidexterity in the arts is perhaps common among poets, particularly minor poets; but in Hopkins we have the unusual case of a great poet who could use his sensibilities as a musician and painter, not merely in the by-practice of these arts, not merely as an enrichment or addition to his poetry, but as an integral part of his poetic genius. The "difficulty" of his work lies in the inaccessibility of critics to the range of his artistic feeling. By some process of critical winking they ignored his religion, his worship of God in nearly everything he wrote; and they have ignored the modes and channels of his art. Here is the painter:

> Crossing the Common, October 13, a fine sunset—great gold field; along the earth-line a train of dark clouds of knopped or clustery make pitching over at the top the way they were going; higher a slanting race of tapered or else coiling fish-like flakes such as are often seen; the gold etched with brighter gold and shaped in sandy places and looped and waved all in waterings. . . .
>
> . . . But what I note it all for is this: before, I had always taken the sunset and the sun as quite out of gauge with each other, as indeed physically they are, for the eye after looking at the sun is blunted to everything else and if you look at the rest of the sunset you must cover the sun, but to-day I inscaped them together and made the sun the true eye and ace of the whole, as it is. It was all active and tossing out light and started as strongly forward from the field as a long stone or a boss in the knob of the chalice-stem: it is indeed by stalling it so, that it falls into scape with the sky.

His poems are crowded with landscapes. No other English poet has worked so intensely on such a ground of realistic perceptions, the exact, yet ecstatic perceptions of a poet alone not merely in the presence of Nature, but of Nature circled by the

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glory of God. Here is a bit of pure landscape painting, an oil in the gallery of poets' water colours :

> Nothing is so beautiful as Spring—
> When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush ;
> Thrush's eggs look little low heavens, and thrush
> Through the echoing timber does so rinse and ring
> The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing ;
> The glassy pear-tree leaves and blooms, they brush
> The descending blue ; that blue is all in a rush
> With richness ; the racing lambs too have fair their fling.
>
> What is all this juice and all this joy ?
> A strain of the earth's sweet being in the beginning
> In Eden Garden.—Have, get, before it cloy,
> Before it cloud, Christ, Lord, and sour with sinning,
> Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,
> Most, O maid's child, thy choice and worthy the winning.

In *Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves*, though he still begins by expressing landscape, you have the musician :

> Earnest, earthless, equal, attuneable, | vaulty, voluminous . . .
> stupendous
> Evening strains to be time's vast, | womb-of-all, home-of-all,
> hearse-of-all night.
> Her fond yellow hornlight wound to the west, | her wild hollow
> hoarlight hung to the height
> Waste ; her earliest stars, earl-stars, | stars principal, overbend us,
> Fire-featuring heaven. For earth | her being has unbound, her
> dapple is at an end as-
> tray or aswarm, all throughther in throngs ; | self in self steepèd
> and páshed—qúite
> Disremembering, dismémbering | áll now. Heart, you round me
> right
> With : Oúr évening is over us ; oúr night | whélms, whélms, ánd
> will end us . . .

That is Hopkins's music at its most magnificent and intricate. But there are countless smaller examples of it in the poems of his middle period.

> " Some find me a sword ; some
> The flange and the rail ; flame,
> Fang, or flood " goes Death on drum,
> And storms bugle his fame.
>
> But wé dream we are rooted in earth—Dust !
> Flesh falls within sight of us, we, though our flower the same,
> Wave with the meadow, forget that there must
> The sour scythe cringe, and the blear share come.

It is even in the transference of accent on a word :

> Both sing sometimes the sweetest, sweetest spells
> Yet both droop deadly sómetimes in their cells.

And in single lines :

> And frightful a nightfall folded rueful a day . . .
>
> Stigma, signal, cinquefoil token . . .
>
> The cross to her she calls Christ to her, christens her wild worst best.

I have given examples of the polyphony, so rich, varied and ringing, of his grandest work ; there are two strains in his poetry ; the other is the simple melody of Vaughan. He began with it (1866) :

> Lilies I show you, lilies none,
> None in Cæsar's gardens blow,—
> And a quince in hand—not one
> Is set upon your boughs below.

But it was continued later, after the terrific interruption of the *Wreck of the Deutschland* (1876), with exquisite effect mingling its tune with the more loaded polyphonic style ; and sometimes he returned to it for the whole length of a poem.

One other essential of Hopkins's poetry remains to be mentioned, the vision (foreshadowed in his schoolboy phrase) of the world as " dappled, parti-coloured." This texture, the artist's sense of life-texture as he works in his medium, is seen most strongly in poems like *Glory be to God for dappled things*, of which it is the theme, but it is present everywhere in his later work, in the verbal texture of the poems.

There is one important date in this poet's life, which divides boyhood from maturity and early poems from great poems—the date of his conversion, 1866. Religion hardened him morally and intellectually, provided him with a background infinitely better to his genius than Greek myth, and brought into his poetry the polyphony of style, parti-colour of pattern, and expanding, realistic and passionate force of his great work. In the face of this it seems to me absurd to speak of damage done to him by conflicts of art and religion, sensuousness and asceticism. The interaction of these forces produced much of his best poetry. A friend wrote of him : " His mind was too delicate a texture to grapple with the rough elements of life " ; and this is true. But it is true also that no other poet has so grappled reality into his imagination, mixing earth with his words. He employed native words, root-words of old stock, rhythms of speech, and compelled them, as did Hardy, by the sheer poetic force and integrity of his mind ; but while with Hardy the words remain sometimes awkward, local or antique, like tough old bits of furniture, in Hopkins they are knocked together, swept along in the one rush of his passion. " Take breath," he said, " and read." The advice is worth a lot of criticism. He was a great poet, how great I shall not venture to guess until I have read him a dozen times more, and a lonely one ; like Berlioz and Van Gogh, alone in his art, demonic, and yet characteristic of his time.

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and synthesis, but, in spite of this, he is quite readable. He believes that five hundred million pounds worth of our imports could be produced at home by the added effort of the two million unemployed and he is not obsessed by the fear of shipping losses. He holds that Danish importations—the Danes employ much cheap Polish labour—keep 100,000 of our people out of agricultural employment, while he reminds us that a Committee of Danish merchants sitting in London regulates prices of imported bacon week by week, and is careful to undercut home producers. He wants to see the 4lb. loaf kept at 6½d. or 7d. with a better share of that price for the home farmer, but he has an insufficient aversion from surplus middlemen. He points out that the Slav and Oriental machine-minders can work year in year out at a lower wage than the Anglo Saxon or Scandinavian and that the latter cannot endure the "utter boredom" for long. Hence come some of our difficulties, and taxation cannot be maintained unless the unemployed can aid the employed to produce the wealth from which it derives. Mr. Fordham does not think internationally, he believes that internationalism must lead to trade war and "would transfer economic power to the exploiters of Oriental and of backward nations and so undermine first the industries and then the life of the more advanced." He goes on to declare that "while men and women are free traders, optimists, pessimists, or internationalists, their minds are paralysed and they cannot see the truth." Yet Mr. Fordham is often reasonable. He seeks equilibrium and a revival of agriculture to establish a balance between town and country and help the field worker to support the urban factory, and holds that given the national good will we might produce the greater part, and possibly the whole, of our essential food supplies.

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Meanwhile, there are some great artists, mostly Roman Catholics by religion, who have been spurred by this dis-ease of the modern world into efforts at an imaginative restatement of the case for a divine order. This answer is not only from Christians: the humanists—that veteran Mr. Havelock Ellis here, Mr. Irving Babbitt in America—have their arguments; but the most powerful work has come recently from Christian writers, especially from three Frenchmen, Henri Bremond, Jacques Maritain, and Paul Claudel. Claudel's great play, *Le Soulier de Satin*, here most felicitously and exquisitely translated by Fr. O'Connor, may come to be regarded as a work of no less importance and influence than *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu* or *Ulysses*. M. Claudel knows that, if theology be a science, religion is an art and can best be served by artists and craftsmen. This huge play is a dramatic comment, full of poetry, of wit, of humour and pity, on the truth of order. Its mythology is Christian; but its philosophy would have been commended by Socrates, and not despised by Aristotle. The old paradoxes are used here to their utmost: the very confusion of the visible world is evidence of the final harmony—if it were not, how should we even entertain the concept of confusion? When Prouheze takes off one slipper and leaves it in the hands of a statue of Mary, so that "when I go headlong into evil, it may be on halting foot," she symbolises the whole world of characters, sums up the whole meaning of the play. It is best to be good, to be perfect; but however bad, however abominable a man may become, it will be better for him if he keep his belief in that order which he flouts; for so, at the very worst, he will not be dispersed as the dust or the broken midges of midsummer, but will go down into hell, and of that place has it not been said, "Thou art there!"

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It is not a bad thing to like people: indeed a certain degree of sympathetic affection is almost necessary for an artist, especially for a novelist. If your work is grounded on hate, you are always confronted with the difficult query "Why then treat of human nature at all?" Why not leave it alone? The haters never do, because their hatred is very rarely pure: it comes from wry sentimentality, from misdirected enthusiasm. So they are tortured by disappointment and disillusion, and flog the world for not being what it should be, if they are to be at ease. Two of our more considerable authors whose work is engendered in disgust or distaste are Mr. Maugham and Mr. Aldous Huxley. All hatreds are based on distortion. Mr. Maugham gets a distorted view of life, because he is always looking thro' the keyhole, and so, seeing things he is not meant to see, gives them a scarcity value. Actually the people he investigates are innocent and ordinary; and it is his own sense of guilt, as he kneels on the mat outside the door, generally a bedroom door, which makes him think them unusual. Mr. Huxley disdains the keyhole. The other day a friend of his said "Whenever I see the giraffe at the Zoo I think of Aldous, looking down from an interminable height"; "Yes," replied another, "at a world of inedible insects." He uses a telescope, does Mr. Huxley; and will not realise that if only he took his eye away from it, he would find the objects he is despising quite decently life-size. *Rotunda* is an Aldous Huxley omnibus—here is a novel, his best, *These Barren Leaves*, his play, several short stories, many of the essays, and not a few poems. Looking through them one is more puzzled than ever at Mr. MacCarthy's judgment that Mr. Huxley is superior in culture to Anatole France, to whom he rightly compares him. It is doubtful even if he is more learned; no doubt he is better informed, but what the devil is the good of information to a man without judgment or a sense of proportion? There is no Monsieur Bergeret in Mr. Huxley's universe, where the world of books is as foolish and unlikely as any other world. Here is, however, wry enough entertainment for those who do not mind entertainment divorced from tenderness and sympathy and understanding; and in the few pieces where Mr. Huxley's self-tormenting temperament allows him to enjoy the spectacle of sensuous life, there is beauty and a certain smoky, uncomfortable radiance.

Mr. Maugham writes by candle-light, after his hosts are gone to bed. This story of incest is in his best manner. He seems to take a perverse pleasure in emphasising the fact that his favourite character is an author who travels about the Federated Malay States, listens to his hosts' confidences, and then writes stories about them. This host, poor devil, betrays himself by choosing out of the narrator's book-bag a life of Lord Byron. For he has known a brother and sister who loved each other, and were talked about. The story is slick rather than subtle; but it has moments of real terror and apprehension, and a brooding sense of accepted danger. Our only complaint is that Mr. Maugham is too scientific—he does not permit himself to be moved by his puppets and their miserable fate. He sees life flat and unprofitable—and this vision of his seems not dramatic, but personal, and not to be escaped.

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I've Quite Forgotten Lucy. By EDWARD STORER. Rider. 3s. 6d.

Alms for Oblivion. By EDWARD DORO. Casa Editorial Franco-Ibero-Americana, Paris.

Poems for Harry Crosby. By C. C. Black Sun Press, Paris.

Most of these authors will pass as fair poets. There is little, on the whole, to quarrel with in their technique, and in most their sincerity will earn them respect, even liking, here and there a degree of enthusiasm. But no more. Though achievement and promise are here in plenty, there is little of any permanent value. That would be almost too much to expect of eight books casually gathered together in these lean years of so little grace.

Perhaps Mr. Abrahams's *Poems* and Mr. Jeffrey's *The Golden Stag* are the most interesting, as well as the most promising, of these eight books. Mr. Abrahams is an authentic poet. His work leaves behind the impression of strength well-reined and of rich, if sombre, colouring, lit now and then with brilliant flashes as of an inward-burning fire. He has a fine command of phrase and a splendid power of imagery. Thus:

> but we shall stitch the air with thought
> To hold the universal silence taut
> With pregnant wisdom.

Or:

> Above the Holy Ark the Cherubim
> Are sipping twilight from the gilded brim
> Of overflowing day.

His style, too, is closely knit and resistant in texture, and he is free of a world whose experiences and whose symbolism are the more vivid because so particularly his own. Yet his

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simplest pieces are often his best—little lyrics like "Summer" or "Your Face is Folded in my Eyes," where he touches something common, even fundamental, to us all. One fault he has: a tendency in his longer poems to overrun his rhyme-scheme and leave loose ends hanging, resulting in a feeling of incompleteness. Side by side with Mr. Abrahams, Miss de Bary's soft-toned *Verses* have a grace akin to that of daffodils or silver birch. Not that they have not a strength of their own. Storm and tempest are absent here, but her quiet and steady regard embraces humour as well as religion and love. "An Orchard Commentary" is as delightful as "And Mary Said 'Be It'" is exquisite:

> Each thought of God that would take flesh
> Needs human handmaid still,
> And all immortal loveliness
> Waits on our mortal will.

A book for calm hours and tranquil reflections. Mr. Jeffrey is more, perhaps too, ambitious. His *Golden Stag* is grandly conceived, in places finely executed. But somehow his "lyrical symphony," lyrical as it undoubtedly is, lacks strength and even clarity. He should aim to control his lyricism, which here and there becomes diffuse, and enthusiasm, which overflows into exaggeration. His style, too, is rather thinly woven, and thus lacks power and effectiveness. Lofty conception and brilliant atmosphere fail to persuade in presence of these blemishes.

As might possibly be expected, Professor Huxley and Sir Leo Chiozza Money too often rise no higher than verse; though occasionally each, Sir Leo particularly, breaks out into genuine poetry. As poetry, Professor Huxley's pieces under the headings "Love" and "Moods" are his best; but many will enjoy the "Fragments from a 'Freudian Faustulus,'" only wishing there were more of it, and "The Green Bayswater" among his Juvenilia. Sir Leo, widely interested in life, is unashamedly not a modern. He often has something well worth while to say, and it is in his less pretentious sonnets, like the delightful "Garden Heretic," that he is to be found at his best.

Perhaps an insincerity in the man who admits that he has "forgotten Lucy" is responsible for the fact that Mr. Storer's verses leave us cold. Most read rather like verse exercises, with an echo—but how faint and far-off!—of that dangerous example, Mr. A. E. Housman. Mr. Doro, on the contrary, is very much alive; "That Cryptic Time," "Hymn in a Moment of Loneliness," and "To night in Philadelphia," to name only three of his poems, display rich qualities of imagination, deep feeling, and considerable power of achievement.

Poems for Harry Crosby are the tribute of a wife to a poet husband taken by death. With one or two exceptions, "Sweet Leaves" for instance, these utterances of a private grief are rather outside the range of public appreciation.

GEORGE ELIOT

The Life of George Eliot. By EMILIE and GEORGES ROMIEU. Translated from the French by BRIAN W. DOWNS. Cape. 7s 6d

Mr. Brownell, writing of the Victorian prose masters as long ago as 1902, asked apropos of George Eliot, "How long is it since George Eliot's name has been the subject of even a literary allusion? What has become of a vogue that even yesterday, it seems, was so great?" To-day, thirty years since that query, we are tempted to ask the same question. For although recently a good deal has been written about her—notably Miss Haldane's *George Eliot and Her Times* in 1927, and in 1928 Mr. Paterson's *George Eliot's Family Life and Letters*, she is hardly ever alluded to, and her books are read principally by uninterested school children upon whom they are imposed as holiday tasks.

Emilie and Georges Romieu have undertaken, not to estimate her real literary worth, not to publish new material regarding her life or her genius, but to make of her an interesting, vital absorbing human being. Time was when contemporary criticism placed her beside Shakespeare, or alternatively ranged her on the same level as Scott, or Goethe, or Carlyle, or Georges Sand, and "the greatest English novelist" was but one of her titles. Now her latest biographers would have us see her as "above all, a woman." For them she is the heroine rather than the authoress of *The Mill on the Floss*. And they succeed in making a tender, clinging, sensual, rather hearty and high-spirited creature, with "luxuriant hair, a clear eye, a fresh cheek, and a swelling lip as appetising as the ripe gooseberry" out of this "quiet, anxious, sedentary, serious, invalidish lady, without animal spirits," whom Henry James described. They make an Athene of Frederick Myer's Sibyl, and an extraordinarily fascinating woman as well. This is emphatically a *vie romancée*, not to say a *vie amoureuse* and, since we are at present generally engaged in excavating the Victorians, in uncovering, with no little malicious enjoyment, our grandparents' nakedness, this will doubtless be a very deservedly popular book. George Eliot's oft-broken heart will become another of the trophies of our curiosity: we shall be able to lay it beside Ruskin's matrimonial infelicity, Lytton's infidelities, and Wordsworth's illegitimate child.

Perhaps the greatest triumph of the Victorians has been their mysteriousness: it is now eighty years since George Eliot died, and we do not yet know whether she was engaged in the Coventry days to a young man of whom her father disapproved, or no; whether she was in love with Herbert Spencer or he with her, whether Mrs. Chapman had any cause to take umbrage at Marian Evans' intimacy with her husband—or what the real Mrs. George Henry Lewes thought of it all. George Eliot has baffled us completely, and whether Emilie and Georges Romieu have called her bluff is not wholly certain. But they have certainly written a very entertaining book, which, in the original, published two years ago in Paris, is quite beautifully written. In English the little sighs, the half-ended sentences, the whimsical . . . are a trifle apt to become gasps and leers, although Mr. Downs has been most conscientiously colloquial in his translation. There are one or two fairly grave errors: Christiana Pearson is called a "lady" in the technically social sense, which she never was; and it is claimed that "George Eliot had a thorough knowledge of five languages. She knew more Greek and Latin than the most brilliant Fellow of a Cambridge or Oxford College, even if a rowing Blue to boot." Actually, alas, her classics were, although remarkable in one entirely self-taught, far below the standard required to obtain a Fellowship at any college—although they might have proved useful in the winning of a Blue . . stocking.

It is over-dramatising her very unsensational elopement to say "she was spared no outrage. She had to run through the whole scale of indignities, affronts, and cowardly insults proffered her by those cowardly women who had found their path ready made before their face . . . it was a terrible ordeal." What made her books the tragedies they are was not the treatment she suffered, but the lack of condign punishment she received. She was brought up to have an immense sense of duty, to believe that the wages of sin are paid C.O.D.: her whole philosophy was a spiritual accepting of absolutely inevitable consequences. So, when she deliberately, in her own conduct of life, "broke all the pledges made and implied for her by her parentage" and found herself not miserable, broken and punished but the reverse, she made of her books what her doll had once been: the sublimation of what her vision told her was retributive justice. The doll received the nails in her head the wicked aunts should have endured; Hetty Sorrel and Maggie Tulliver received what Marian Evans believed to be her due. Her remorse crucified her heroines: because she had attained her ideals, she denied Dorothea Casaubon; because she herself became rich, she punished Gwendolen Harleth for her ambitions: each wrong she believed she herself had done she avenged in her novels; each right she had left undone she rewarded. And this close connection between her life and her characters is missed in this otherwise excellent "Life," for Emilie and Georges Romieu consider that suffering "made George Eliot's soul sublime," whereas it only taught her sublimation. Hetty and Maggie were her sin-eaters, her scapegoats, nor were her novels past autobiography only.

Once upon a time an Englishman, a Frenchman, and a German each wrote a book about elephants. The Englishman produced one volume entitled *With a Rifle Amongst the Elephants*; the German three tomes anent the *Psychologische und Biologische Reaction der Elephanten in Naturliches Umgebungen*, and the Frenchman wrote but 170 sparklingly witty pages on *L'Elephant et ses Amours*. The biographies of George Eliot by Leslie Stephen, J. W. Cross, and Emilie and Georges Romieu correspond roughly to the above three examples of national divergencies.

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Matthew Arnold is remarkable among the writers of his age for being a man of public spirit, deeply and actively interested in politics, especially in how the State affected or might affect the lives of his fellow-countrymen; and of all his books, *Culture and Anarchy* is the one which deals most directly with this subject. So it is a book of value to students of social history, and even to those whose interest is more in particular persons and events in the past than in general conditions, to those who love an authenticated fact, however trivial it is; and these people will be specially pleased by the new edition of *Culture and Anarchy*, because Dr. Dover Wilson has restored in it the lively personal references that were suppressed by the author after the first edition, and explained them by notes, and so made intelligible and vivid a good deal that was obscure. Yet *Culture and Anarchy*, while it is practical in intention and written for a particular decade, and while Dr. Dover Wilson, in preparing it for his series of *Landmarks in the History of Education*, has naturally laid most stress on its historical value, is much more than a historical document; its most important claim to interest is as literature, and as the thought and expression of a remarkably gifted mind.

Some writers have a kind of natural anonymity, so that we have no curiosity about them and do not think of them when we read their work It is not altogether a matter of what form they use: most of the Elizabethans were impersonal in this sense when they wrote love sonnets as well as when they wrote plays, and Milton, even when he was putting forward views that he held most closely, had the anonymity of a prophet, and Dryden, at his most relaxed and flippant, the anonymity of a gentleman. Matthew Arnold, on the other hand, seems to be personally present even in his narrative poems. This is partly because most readers know him well from his more directly self-expressive writing, because he revealed his mind very clearly and fully in that; but the reason that he did so, and the chief reason why our interest in the writer remains conscious and important even when we are reading his most impersonal poems, is in the unity and seriousness of his temperament. Dr. Dover Wilson says that he was all of a piece: he had an almost too present moral consciousness, which involved all his activity, intellectual as well as physical; he had the need to make a unity and order, not only, as many people have it, in his mind but in his life; in short, he was a philosopher in his heart and a practical moralist in the workings of his brain. It was natural that a man so conscious and consistent and desirous of consistency, being a writer, should wish to express his whole mind and universe in his writing, and that even what he wrote in moments of the fullest detachment and imaginative freedom should be marked by his serious spirit. It was also natural that his writing should be very closely connected with his other activities, as *Culture and Anarchy*, a vision and a defence of education, is with his work as a State school inspector.

In his poetry one notices a profound diffidence and pessimism; it is a native and unobtrusive quality, almost like a physical function. It does not clash with his religious faith, but it colours slightly everything he thinks of, and especially his hopes for civilisation and the future of mankind. This kind of pessimism, this dissatisfaction with the present state of the world and doubt for its future, generally drives poets of a less catholic conscience to despair of it and to live in their poetry like an island. The born realists accept it. Matthew Arnold, almost alone, with the temperament of a defeatist, continued to live in the world and to work for it practically and in his writing. In his prose work, which is generally positive and often gay, for he enjoyed controversy keenly, one feels less than in his poetry this innate tendency to despair; but it is there, colouring this, too; all the time, whatever practical advice he might give (though, as his opponents complained, he did not give much), however much he might school himself to be fair and patient, it was perfection that he wanted for himself and the human race, and he was always sad and dispirited because that was unattainable.

When a man has expressed himself so fully in his work, it is to be expected that the work should be, on the whole, liked or disliked with strong personal feeling. It is difficult, if it is desirable, to consider it with detachment, apart from its author. A good many people find Matthew Arnold unbearable: they are infuriated by his bland rudeness to his opponents, by the patronising patience with which he reiterates his points, as if it was to a class of very dull children; they call his seriousness priggishness and pomposity. It is true, perhaps, that his conscientious and arduous goodness is not the most immediately attractive kind of goodness, and that his poetry and prose is overweighted with it; and it is true, and sad, that people must love or admire him as a personality before they can begin to find in his writing any of its lightness and beauty. E. J. SCOVELL.

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Like all successful generals, of course, and like all successful men of any kind, he was the favourite of fortune. The Persians, from the very first, gave away enormous advantages, and constantly played into his hands. A good general could certainly have made the Granicus a Macedonian disaster instead of a resounding triumph. There *was* a good general on the Persian side, but the Satraps would not listen to him. Shortly afterwards that general died, and Alexander had to meet, not Memnon but Darius himself, the feeblest of enemies. But one can ask no more of a commander than that he should know him to take the fullest advantage of his opponent's errors; and not even Napoleon knew this better than Alexander. He had another Napoleonic quality. He never won a victory without annihilating the hostile army. All this is well drawn out in this book.

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pretty safe ground: our authorities go back to Ptolemy himself. But for the other, and far more important, aspect we have to piece together scattered hints, and make conjectures from the policy of his wisest successors. It seems to us that Professor Wilcken has come as near as possible to success in this difficult task.

Alexander was the pupil of Aristotle, and unquestionably learnt much from him. But he was at his highest in the point on which he refused to follow his master. He would have nothing of the "Greek and barbarian" theory—the theory of a superior race and a race meant by nature for slavery. He was too keen-sighted to despise the Persians because he had conquered them. As Cæsar filled his own ranks with vanquished Gauls, and made the Cisalpines Roman citizens, so Alexander made captains and army corps of Persian soldiers. His old comrades could not understand him; they accused him of Medising. He might have answered, like Agesilaus before him, that the Medes were Hellenising: but this would not have been quite the truth. He wished no domination of one race by the other, but the fusion of the two.

The effect of his work was the transference of the centre of gravity of the Greek world from the West to the East. Alexandria, Antioch, and Seleucia eclipsed Athens and Sparta. The process was something like that which, at a slower pace, and on a grander scale, is going on before our eyes to-day: the gradual shifting of the centre of the English-speaking people from East to West. But it was inevitable that the conquered East should ultimately absorb its conquerors—not however without suffering a profound modification of its own character and civilisation. For thirteen hundred years the East spoke Greek and thought itself Greek. But Oriental ideas remained powerful; many of them resisted the foreign influence, and one in particular rushed over the whole West and destroyed not only the old religions but the old imperial power. It must be remembered, however, that Christianity made use of the very civilisation which Alexander and his successors had created in order to do its dissolving work. The Gospel was preached in Greek; it found its first welcome in towns built or rebuilt by Macedonian kings; and it travelled along Macedonian roads.

What would have happened if Alexander had lived another thirty years can, of course, only be guessed. He certainly had designs against Carthage, and he might have been drawn against Rome. We know what the patriotic Livy thought would have been the result of an Italian campaign, and how he sets up Papirius Cursor as a match for Alexander. Professor Wilcken does not deign even to mention Livy's opinion. He knows what to omit as well as what to say. E. E. KELLETT.

HIS FLESH AND BLOOD

My Flesh and Blood. A Lyric Autobiography. By GEORGE SYLVESTER VIERECK. Jarrolds. 12s. 6d.

If there is a nonsense-book of the month and a prize for the silliest volume of the year, *My Flesh and Blood* must carry off both palms. A fool's cap, tasselled with gold and stitched of banknotes, would not do justice to our appreciation of its quality.

Mr. Viereck, you understand, is a poet—that is to say, he has written verses, passionate trifles in which the imagery of Swinburne is often allied to the rollicking metres of Sir Henry Newbolt. And now the time has come to tell us more. Mr. Viereck has collected his early poems and, supplementing them with an elaborate prose commentary, has compiled a lyric record of his inner life. The result would have been worthy of Pecuchet, if Pecuchet had had the pretensions of Casanova.

But let us take an example of his method. One hesitates between *Spawn of Strange Nights*, a chapter that includes many of his finest efforts and some rich fragments of autobiographical digression, and the more soberly entitled *Phallic Litany*, choosing at last a poem called *The Love Seal*:

> A silver sea beneath the stars—
> We paid to love his mystic rites,
> And from thy lips I kissed the scars
> Of fiercer joys and stranger nights.
>
> What redder lips, what mouth of fate,
> Till Buddha lingers near the goal,
> Shall, stronger still, obliterate
> My one night's madness from thy soul?

Now turn to Mr. Viereck's prose gloss:

> A golden-haired daughter of Lilith lured me to the sea-side. I arrived with a pair of newly bought silk pajamas! We met in a book shop like two conspirators. But we did not meet alone. My inamorata was wildly excited. It seems that her wretched husband had set detectives upon her trail.

Why "pajamas?" one queries, perhaps irrelevantly. And why a book shop, for so intense an assignation? The next paragraph is somewhat disappointing; prudence, we learn, prevailed over concupiscence and the enamoured pair reluctantly decided to part, though not before Mr. Viereck's potential mistress had introduced him "to a charming young person whose dark brown curls contrasted coquettishly with the gold in hers. She deliberately ignited our passion to provide for herself, a vicarious thrill, for me, an amour. Jealousy did not enter." Mr. Viereck, it is obvious from this development, is an *homme à bonnes fortunes* in every sense.

Certainly, he deserves his good luck. No poet, at least in the reviewer's recollection—not the redoubtable Lord Rochester himself, who was often obliged to admit to a fiasco and whose record of his conquests and escapades is sometimes diluted by a savage sort of wit—has "trod the lees of pleasure" with greater aplomb or to rhythms more aggressively exuberant:

> Your body's treasures are mine to-day,
> Though bitter as gall be their savour still;
> From head to foot shall my kisses play,
> Till naught is kept from their sovereign will!
>
> The voice of my need supreme must guide
> My passionate love to its destined goal;
> My feverish fingers shall seek and glide
> Until at last I hold the soul.

"'Love Triumphant,'" Mr. Viereck explains, "is a pæan of passion. It was written when I was sixteen or seventeen, and was the cause of my failure in mathematics. . . . The married lady whose semi-maternal caresses wrought such havoc in my young heart was the first woman of refinement who gave herself to me. It was not my first experience with sexual intercourse"—yet it was signalised by the unfolding of a great gift. Every reader with a fine nose for the ridiculous can be recommended to this American-German Enoch Soames.

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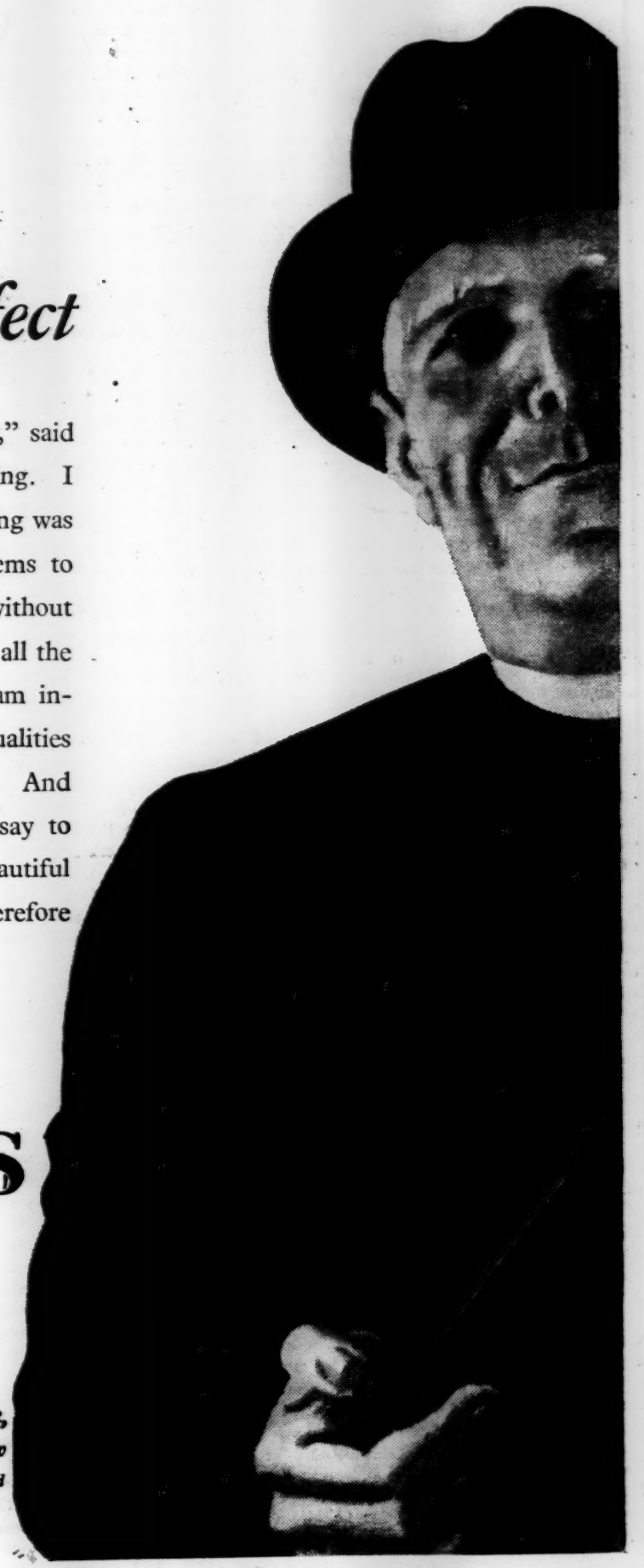

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A RE-EXAMINATION OF DARWINISM

The Causes of Evolution. By J. B. S. HALDANE, F.R.S. Longmans Green. 7s. 6d.

To measure everything that can be measured, and to make measurable what cannot yet be measured—such, in a famous phrase, is the primary aim of scientific effort. And it has been held, with a considerable degree of plausibility, that until these metrical operations can be carried out, the discussions of a subject must remain, as far as science is concerned, within the realm of conjecture and fancy.

No more convincing support for this view can be found than the case of evolution-theory, about which so many volumes of profitless stuff have been written in the past, and indeed continue to be written to-day. At the present time we have three groups of persons who are mainly concerned with evolution-theory: first, a small but highly vocal body of biologists and scientific journalists who hold anti-Darwinian views, largely on metaphysical grounds, and who express them largely by means of the emotive use of language; secondly, the main mass of working biologists who, while maintaining an open mind, recognise that Darwin probably did not claim too much for the process of natural selection; and, thirdly, a very small group of men, not more than a dozen in the world, who are applying mathematics to the theory of evolution in the attempt to evaluate quantitatively the part played by the various factors—factors which otherwise can form only the counters of sterile logomachics.

Mr. Haldane belongs to this third group, and in *The Causes of Evolution* he gives to the general reader the main conclusions to which his mathematical processes have led him, the latter themselves being included in summary form in an appendix of considerable length. From the preface alone, the trend of the book reveals itself—Mr. Haldane refers to his argument "which purports to prove that mutation, Lamarckian transformation, and so on, cannot prevail against natural selection of even moderate intensity." "Intensity"—a refreshing word, a word of consolation and hope to the scientific worker, weary of the deserts of uncontrolled speculation and semi-theological extravagance commonly laid forth in the name of science. For "intensity" can be measured, and only by measurement can we hope to know precisely how far Darwin was right; how far Lamarck was wrong; not by the brilliant verbiage of a Butler or a Shaw, not by the tendencious argumentation of a MacBride or a MacDougall.

No doubt the main advance which has been made in these questions since the time of Darwin is in our knowledge of the nature of variation. To him variation was something very amorphous, slight changes being continually produced in all directions, radiating, as it were, from the group of properties possessed by a species at a given moment. We know to-day far more than this about the causes of variation, and Mr. Haldane classifies them into extra-nuclear factors, single-gene differences, several-gene differences, differences in the location of genes on the gene-map, duplication of genes, and finally polyploidy, or the addition of one or more complete sets of genes. The living organism is, as it were, quite unstable, but its instability is intelligible, and there are certain well-marked ways in which the instability manifests itself. Particularly interesting in this connection is the problem of apparently continuously variable characters, such as the number of hens' eggs laid per bird per annum, or their weight. Here there must be in some way a transition from the qualitative or atomic gene-world to the quantitative continuous world of externals, and the transition is doubtless made by way of the ductless glands.

Mr. Haldane's book does not pretend to be exhaustive, but it would have been valuable to have heard his views on questions such as the polyphyletic account of evolution, which arises out of the well-known paucity of link-forms connecting the phyla. Such questions would have been almost more in place than the eighteen metaphysico-theological pages in the final chapter, interesting though these undoubtedly are. But Mr. Haldane has given us a book to place beside the treatises of Volterra, Lotka, and Fisher, on a shelf devoted to the really valuable and indispensable contributions to twentieth-century evolution-theory. Those who wish for light on the evolution-theory of the future will find gleams of it on that shelf, and on no other.

JOSEPH NEEDHAM.

About Motoring

THE 80 MILES AN HOUR FORD

WHEN Henry Ford decided to abandon his historic policy of concentrating upon a single model, he displayed his usual thoroughness. For some time past the popular four-cylinder Ford has been manufactured with engines of two different sizes, a large engine for countries with a rational taxation system, and a small engine for countries like Britain, which elect to handicap pure science by taxing cars in terms of engine size. Quite recently these two fours were flanked by an extremely attractive "baby," known as the 8 h.p. model, which is possibly the best 8 h.p. car ever built. And now the Ford directors announce a 30 h.p. model with a V type eight-cylinder engine, taxed in Great Britain at £30 per annum, and designed to sell at about £250 to £260 with a plain form of enclosed body. This multiplication of models is perfectly logical. In the early days of mass production a designer could achieve a rock-bottom price only with the aid of a very simple programme, limited to a single chassis, though this programme permitted a wide range of coachwork. To-day similar economies are easily procurable with a full series of chassis; and every manufacturer of eminence caters for many of the different grades of motorists. It is rather disastrous from a British standpoint that the R.A.C. taxation rating will hamper the sale of this model in our home market. The car unquestionably represents extraordinary value for money. No other maker in the world offers his clients an 80 miles an hour car at so low a price. For many of us speeds of 70 miles and over may possess no great attraction. But there is no motorist who would not relish the crashing acceleration of this vehicle. Acceleration of this quality automatically confers a great factor of safety; it safeguards all overtaking, and it enables a driver to wriggle out of many an awkward road situation in which he would be helpless on a more sluggish car. This car possesses only three gears; but it can reach a speed of very nearly 60 miles on its second gear, a figure approached by no rivals outside the sphere of racing cars. The secret of its amazing performance is to be found in its small size and low weight. The wheelbase is only 10in. longer than that of the popular four-cylinder Ford, and the gross weight is no more than 23 cwt. The eight-cylinder engine, constructed with V cylinders, occupies no more platform space than the four-cylinder, but develops 65 b.h.p. at peak revolutions. Since the torque of an eight-cylinder engine is so much smoother than that of a four, the transmission, crankshaft, and other major components need be very slightly heavier than the corresponding parts of a four-cylinder chassis. The car is endowed with such a marvellous power-to-weight ratio that it will accelerate from rest to sixty miles an hour in little more than a quarter of a minute; and an enclosed model has actually been driven up the Brooklands test hill at twenty miles an hour on top gear. In performance the car is definitely a world-beater, and until Ford's principal rivals have time to change their models, it will nibble deeply into their sales. From an English point of view it unfortunately possesses two grave drawbacks. Its horse-power rating involves a very heavy tax, and as our insurance companies further scale their policy premiums with one eye on horse-power, its annual insurance will probably cost an absurd sum in proportion to the price of the car. In addition, such a performance on the road is normally purchased by a heavy fuel consumption. This will in any case be well under twenty miles a gallon, and may be as high as fifteen. The popularity of the car will thus be severely limited in these islands; and the folly of our taxation basis becomes apparent; for if cars were taxed in terms of first cost, few motorists with £250 or so to spend would look any further for their 1933 cars. At this low price no money is available for frills, and the bodywork will be plain, and to an eye accustomed to British standards might even be described as rather dingy, though chromium and cellulose prevent the cheap car from growing shabby at the appalling rate associated with cheap American cars of ten years back.

The springing is typically Ford. The car does not roll on corners and does not bump on normal roads; it is, nevertheless, inclined to be rather lively on rough going. The transmission is as excellent as the engine. The gear box is constructed on the synchro-mesh principle for easy gear changing, is silent in action, and remarkably quiet on the overrun. The brakes are better

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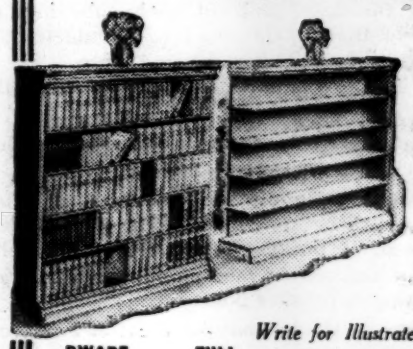

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than those characteristic of cheap American cars until recent days. At 45 miles an hour the car can be stopped in a perfectly straight line without excessive effort within 24 yards. At slow speeds the stopping power is entirely adequate; and at the car's highest speed the brakes compare well with those of a typical sporting car. No car in the world is easier to drive, as the incredible flexibility of this huge engine, coupled with the low weight of the chassis and the easy handling of the gears, permit an indifferent driver to make the car do just what he wishes it to do. The body space is apparently similar to that of the corresponding coachwork on the four-cylinder models. The front seats are separate armchairs, and slide by means of simple mechanism. The single rear bench is 3ft. 6in. wide, with a seat squab 21in. deep. The leg-room, both fore and aft, is satisfactory, and the interior height is good. The engine makes a fair amount of noise on full throttle, but is delightfully quiet at all those speeds which are normally employed on the road. The appearance is simple and dignified enough, without any special claims to beauty. The cooling appears to be excellent, and the machine should be a sheer joy to drive in the Alps. The equipment follows accustomed lines, but English manufacturers should note that there is a double thiefproof attachment, a Yale lock putting both the steering and the ignition out of action. I particularly like the lockable steering. In all countries park attendants and garage hands are apt to maltreat cars by changing their positions in the owner's absence, forcing the steering wheel hard over with the car stationary. The Ford key makes this impossible, besides complicating the attacks of thieves. An ignition lock is no defence; but a gear or steering lock can defy an expert in a public place; he must usually procure a master key or make a considerable noise by smashing the lock with heavy tools, and so attracting attention.

The car is equally manageable on hills and in traffic. It can be taken across London as speedily and comfortably as any car in the world; and on really steep hills a severe check does not entail a descent to a lower gear, followed by a long, noisy crawl. This car will provoke our engineers to criticise the existing basis of our motor car taxes. R. E. DAVIDSON.

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Playtime

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

Problem 13

CUBICLES

Professor Calculus gave each of his four sons a large wooden cube.

Said the Professor:

"I want each of you to assign to the six faces of his cube the numbers 1 to 6 respectively. Then divide each face into four squares, and write in each square the number assigned to that face.

"Thus:

2	2
2	2

"Next, take your fret-saws, and cut each cube into eight smaller ones. Each of these little cubes (or 'cubicles') will have three numbered and three unnumbered faces. The sum of the numbers on its three numbered faces we will call its Total."

The boys did as they were told, and in a short time each produced his eight Cubicles for inspection.

"Good," said Professor Calculus. He examined the Cubicles. "I now set aside two of these; one has a Total of Nine and the other a Total of Seven. I put the remainder of the Cubicles into a hat. If I draw one out at random the chances are two to one against its having a Total of Nine.

"How many Cubicles in the hat have a Total of Fourteen?"

What is the answer?

Problem 11

TAKING A CHANCE

This problem has produced a spate of mathematics and some very interesting letters. The answer—that Arsen must give all his three votes to Crooke—is arrived at in various ways.

The correct method in my opinion is the following:

Given Arsen's assumptions [as set out in the problem] there are four possible distributions of Burgler's votes and three of Crooke's. Thus Arsen has to consider twelve possibilities altogether, each of which he must regard as equally probable. The distribution of his own votes which gives him second place in the largest number of cases (six out of the twelve) is that stated above.

There is not space here to set out the working in detail.

I must own to some surprise at the submission of correct solutions from sixty-five competitors.

Points awarded to:

Dr. L. C. Adam, Agitat, Asquitha, Arlyn, J. Bailey, D. Barber, B. Brewster, Bronson, A. L. Bulley, V. Butler, J. B. Channon, H. L. Cox, A. Crokingburn, Cooper, Crooked Dean, L. C. Clarke, T. W. Chaundy, Rev. C. Dinwoodie, V. J. D., Major Fletcher, T. Faint, E. C. I. Garner, G. E. Goodman, W. P. Hudson, Initio, A. J., A.K., P.K., A. C. Lynch, W. A. Lynch, F. S. M., F. Morrell, Mercutio, Macbeth, F. E. Maitland, A. F. Mackenzie, H. Moore, W.B.M., J. P. McEvoy, G. P. Meredith, J. L. Mackenzie, W. Oldham, J. Procter, G. C. Potter, J. L. Priston, M. Ross, L.R., Roscoe, L. G. Roussin, Rigel, S.T.S., F. P. Streeten, D. G. Sopwith, Sciss, J. Todd, Major L. M. Sandison, Thoriger, Henry Vine, H. Vallance, B. Wills, W. A. Whitehouse, Vic Waldron, C. H. Waddington, F. M. Worthen, F. Wright.

Problem 9: L. G. Roussin

TO SOLVERS

1. I have been greatly pressed for time, lately, and a number of interesting letters await an answer. Will solvers please accept this general acknowledgment, and my assurance of a reply at the first opportunity?

2. My first Problem Contest ends with the problem of the "Cubicles." I shall be very glad to have the comments of competitors on the Contest—which naturally has been to some extent of an experimental character—and in particular their views as to which types of problem afford the best entertainment.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

BY TOREADOR

CONVERSION AND GOUT—AMERICAN EQUITIES—METROPOLITAN AND THE BILL—UNDERGROUND

WILL a Conversion Scheme for 5 per cent. War Loan ever be launched while we have a Chancellor of the Exchequer subject to attacks of gout? I have always maintained that Lord Snowden in his Exchequer days missed two chances of converting because he was a sick man. Is the taxpayer to be denied the relief of a lower interest charge on about one-third of the national debt merely because Mr. Neville Chamberlain gets the gouty equivalent of cold feet whenever the yields on long-dated stocks fall below 4 per cent.? Here we have Consols 4 per cent. at 100⅞, Conversion 3½ per cent. over 90⅛, Local Loans 3 per cent. at 75 9/16—yielding £4 0s. 2d. per cent., £3 18s. 1d. per cent. and £3 19s. 8d. per cent., respectively. It would be better to issue the three months' notice calling 5 per cent. War Loan for repayment while there is an expectancy of good from Lausanne than to wait for the *fait accompli*—which may, after all, be bad. Such a notice cannot, of course, be issued until the banks and investment institutions have been canvassed as to their attitude to the conversion Loan, which may or may not have to be underwritten, but I have heard of no canvassing being done by the Treasury authorities. In fact, all the market is talking about is the possibility of a conversion of the Treasury 4½ per cent. Bonds 1932/34. It would be far better if Mr. Neville Chamberlain gave some instructions to the Treasury before repairing to Harrogate for his next cure.

* * *

Several investment experts are advising their clients to sell British industrial shares forthwith and jump into American equities. The argument is that in September, 1929, the American investor was borrowing on short term at 15 per cent. to buy shares yielding under 3 per cent., whereas to-day he refuses to borrow at about 4 per cent. to invest in shares of the highest grade yielding 15 per cent. to 25 per cent. These are panic conditions, it is said, which will not last. There is a good deal of force in this argument. The average dividend yield to-day of 50 American industrial common stocks, according to Standard Statistics, is 9.27 per cent., whereas according to the Actuaries' Investment Index the average yield on British industrial shares is as follows: 41 productive, 5.19 per cent; 33 distributive, 5.83 per cent.; 58 miscellaneous, 6.79 per cent., bringing the average for 132 industrial shares to 6.05 per cent. (The high miscellaneous yield is accounted for by brewery shares, which are now returning an average yield of 10 per cent.) The extraordinary yields now being returned on some of the leading American industrials are shown in the following statement:

	1932. High.	1932. Low.	Present Price.	1931 Earnings. %	Present Div. Rate. $	Dividend Yield. %
Drug	57	23	27¾	5.55	4.0	14.41
National Dairy Products ...	31⅞	15⅛	16⅛	3.47	2.60	15.76
Woolworth	45⅞	23⅛	25⅞	3.19	2.40	9.41
Reynolds Tobacco	40⅛	26¾	27⅜	3.64	3.0	10.91
National Biscuit	46⅞	27⅛	28⅛	2.86	2.80	9.96
Cons. Gas of N.Y.	68¾	33⅝	36¾	4.94	4.0	10.92
Liggett and Myers	61⅞	32⅛	37½	6.87	5.0	13.33
American Tob. B.	89¾	45	50⅜	9.07	6.0	11.91
General Foods	40½	20	20⅜	3.44	3.0	14.55

It will, of course, be appreciated that the last has not been heard of dividend reductions. Moreover, as I have already argued, until inflation of credit is translated into inflation of consuming power, which may be done by public relief works, by the encashment of War Veterans' bonuses or by an all-round rise in wages and salaries, there is not likely to be any lasting recovery in America. And at the moment there is complete lack of political and moral leadership in the United States. The New World is actually waiting to be pulled out of its rut by the Old.

* * *

As a reflection of the panic which succeeds boom in the American business cycle, the (British) Ford Motor Company shares of £1 are now standing at 15s. 6d. These shares were pushed up to nearly £5 on the craziest of American buying in 1928. It is unfortunate that Mr. Henry Ford should have launched the gigantic enterprise of the Dagenham works at the apex of the boom, for, with Europe in the trough of the slump, it has little chance of profit. The original plan was that the American Ford should supply from Detroit the United States and South American markets, Russia, China and Japan, that the Canadian Ford should supply the British Empire, and that the British Ford should deal with Europe, Asia Minor and North Africa. Clearly, the vast factory at Dagenham, erected at enormous expense to turn out a limited range of products in a now severely restricted market, had become an uneconomic proposition. Moreover, the Continental Ford companies, controlled by the British Ford, were faced with having to purchase chassis and parts from an English factory which would be more expensive than Detroit. The position was complicated by the fact that the Detroit factory had concentrated on a new eight-cylinder engine, whereas the British Ford had improved the four-cylinder model and launched a new Baby Ford. Some drastic reorganisation or regrouping of markets was necessary. It has now been decided that the new Baby Ford is to be manufactured at Dagenham by the British company and sold through the British Empire by the Canadian Ford, while the new eight-cylinder Ford from Detroit is to be sold by the Canadian Ford to the British Ford for distribution in the British territory. Last year the American Ford lost something like $53,000,000, the Canadian Ford made a loss of $1,385,000, and the British Ford a loss of £134,489. If Ford fails, who shall stand?

* * *

The London Passenger Transport Bill comes before the House of Commons again in the autumn session. The interested parties have not been idle. A lot of work has been done behind the scenes which could not have been done in public. It is said that the Metropolitan Railway has been squared. This company was always the loudest and silliest in its opposition to the Bill as a piece of Socialistic legislation, but it had some reasonable arguments—that it projects into the country for a considerable distance beyond the London Passenger Transport Area and carries a fair mineral and goods traffic, that the arrangements for co-ordination which were found suitable and sufficient in the case of the suburban passenger traffic of the main line companies should be equally suitable and sufficient for the Metropolitan, and that the disposal of country estates in Metroland and the letting of town flats over Baker Street Station are no concern of a London Passenger Transport Board. It is rumoured that the agreement of the Metropolitan Railway to the Bill has now been bought by the promise of a guaranteed dividend of 3½ per cent for a period of three years. What grain of truth lies in this rumour I cannot say—"Met" earnings and dividends in 1931 were 2.8 per cent. and 2.5 per cent., respectively—but it is significant that Metropolitan Railway ordinary stock has risen from 41½ to 53½. The financial strength of the company is not impressive. Its last balance sheet showed cash £5,000 and Government securities nil as compared with £261,000 and £141,000, respectively, in the previous year. There was a deficit of current assets over current liabilities of £111,000. Nevertheless, the new 5 per cent. debenture stock stands at 106 to yield £4 14s. 10d.

* * *

Meanwhile Underground Electric Railways Company ordinary shares remain a dull market at 15s. 6d., having tumbled from a high level of 20s. this year and 24s. 10½d. last year. The reasons for the slump are clear. In the first place there is a threat of labour trouble for the London General Omnibus; secondly, there is the expectation of a rise in the price of petrol, which, if not passed on to the travelling public, would take away the profits of the one big revenue producer in the group; thirdly, there is the fall in the traffic receipts of "the common fund" amounting to 2.4 per cent. for the first quarter of 1932 as compared with the corresponding quarter in 1931 (which was 1.9 per cent. below that of 1930); and, fourthly, there is the addition to the prior charges of the Tube companies, the interest on which will be a charge on the revenue as soon as the new works are completed. It is useful for the investor to bear in mind that the operating companies of the Underground group—City and South London, Central London, London Electric, Metropolitan District and the London General Omnibus—pay into a common fund the balance of their profits remaining after deduction of operating expenses, interest and dividends on prior charge stock and shares, and certain sums for reserve. Thus the Underground Electric Railways cannot earn profits until the prior charges of the operating companies have been met. Hence its debenture stock ranks in point of security just prior to the common stocks of the operating companies. This 5 per cent. debenture stock of the Underground Electric Railways is quoted at 104¼ to yield £4 16s. 5d. per cent., and I think it might well be exchanged for the debentures of the main line companies yielding over 5 per cent.

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THESE HOPES OF HEAVEN

I SHOULD better construe
This world's great plan
Could I see all round
A meridian;
Your longitude's high,
But latitude's flat,
And it's hard to be
Content with that!

I've a body of ease
That I enjoy,
And a mind of my own
For wit's employ;
Yet the devil's pursuit
Comes pittatipat—
Yes, love I mean—
But who wants that?

And I might regard
These hopes of heaven
Were the world less sour
And the just more even.
The Lord, they say,
Pays tit for tat,
But it's hard to be
Content with that!

A. E. COPPARD.

WHAT A PIECE OF WORK!

A Correspondence between Rose Macaulay and R. Ellis Roberts.

MY DEAR ROSE,

I think you and I are agreed that Hamlet's "man" is ἄνθρωπος rather than ἀνὴρ; and that when Prospero is prognosticating that "our little life is rounded by a sleep" he is speaking, primarily, perhaps, of the persons in his *Tempest*, then of the human race. Most of the poets, indeed, seem to believe that the common humanity of men and women matters far more than that trivial difference of sex, which is so important to each that it becomes insignificant to both. Yet there are people who cannot apparently refrain from treating the other, the opposite, the wrong, the mistaken, the unnecessary, the foolish, the logical sex as a permanent opposition. These observers of life can comfortably begin their sentences with "All men" or "Every woman," and proceed blandly to statements to which any of us can immediately find obvious exceptions. A pretty little book, called *Man, Proud Man* (Hamish Hamilton, 7s. 6d.) consists of essays by eight women, and it is full of such dangerous generalisations about Man, that is, the male creature. If for the moment I accept its general outlook, and adopt its habit of thought, you will understand that this is mere infection—all women (you see?) are so persuasive, especially women novelists. It is true one of the contributors has refused to play up; and her essay, which is not cricket, is by far the best in the book. Miss G. B. Stern says quite bluntly and truthfully

> No such thing as generic Man. No such thing as generic Woman. Therefore, no such thing as difference between them.

and also reveals what, I believe, is the fact that

> Authors frequently disguise real-life characters wanted for novels, by reversing the sexes. Family of father, two daughters and nephew; call it mother, two sons, and niece. Disguise efficient but story and characteristics can usually remain exactly the same.

Miss Stern then tells us some very entertaining things about men, a very different matter from pontificating about Man. (Though I would always admit that there are men who seem to wish to be thought of as Man, and women who beseech us to take them as Woman—but not, I think, the most intelligent or attractive of either sex.) The other contributors to *Man, Proud Man* are Mary Borden, E. M. Delafield, Susan Ertz, Storm Jameson, Helen Simpson, Sylvia Townsend Warner, and Rebecca West. I find in all the essays a lack of strict scientific treatment of the subject, even on the lines of their rather primitive zoology. There is no discussion whether Man is fauna, flora, or merely a particularly unfortunate break in the weather. On the whole, I should say Miss Delafield, Miss West, and Miss Borden would lean to the climatic explanation; and the rest would reluctantly admit that Man was "fauna." I have tried my best to think of myself as Man—I have intoxicated myself with *The Sheikh*, Miss Dell's *Charles Rex*, and *Hindoo Love-Lyrics*—to discover which author did most damage to my self-conceit. I find Miss Simpson unfairest. It is pretty grim in the middle of the spring-cleaning season to have Man held up to ridicule as the collecting animal. He gives other things a chance to collect too, if it only be dust, crumbs, and creases. Miss Delafield appears never to meet any men except such as are snatched from their cradles and straightaway made members of the M.C.C. and the Bachelors' Club—whether this is bad luck or bad management on her part I cannot determine. Miss Ertz's investigation of Man as the pleasure-seeker has some very fair hits; but she forgets to mention that Woman is always better off than Man, because she has Man for her amusement—while he only has Woman—and not even the gods can save from destruction the man who thinks women are merely funny. Indeed, I think I'll leave you the other essays and this question: Have you ever known a woman who would deny that in her heart she finds every man she knows rather ridiculous? There may be a few men who think similarly about all the women they know—but dare they say it? Do they believe it when they say it? After all (for a final generalisation), when a man makes a fool of himself in love he looks, and is, a fool (even though he try hard to avoid it, as Horace Walpole did); when a woman makes a fool of herself in love, she's a tragedy, or a theme for pitiful loving kindness.

Yours,
R. ELLIS ROBERTS.

MY DEAR ELLIS,—Yes, we are most certainly agreed that sex generalisations are dangerous, and are as often overdone as cutlets. Are we, I wonder, also agreed that the eight intelligent essayists in this book set out deliberately to prove this very thing? Miss G. B. Stern (I, too, like her notes very much) frankly states it; the others prove it by ironical parody. For I understand that the idea behind this book at its inception was to put forth a parody of, and a long overdue repartee to, the many hundreds of tomes, tracts, semi-scientific professorial inquiries, skits, generalisations, and aphorisms of which men have, from the first ages on, delivered themselves concerning women. It is a significant fact that this vast output has continued in all countries, through so many centuries, and met with such

scant retort. Woman has, in fact, sat down under these man-hurled missiles, and but seldom answered back in kind. She, poor thing, by the Book of Genesis called a rib, by the Fathers of the Church regarded less as a human being than as a lust, by preachers classed with wine and dicing as a vice, by Popes and Councils suspected as slightly sub-human, by poets railed at, by Roman satirists called *necessarium malum*, by John Milton considered scarcely even this, by German and English professors held up for unfavourable analysis through stout volumes, by a recent Dutch writer stated to be so unindividualised as to have no national characteristics, by Mr. Arnold Bennett called non-moral, by—but why continue the endless list? It can all be summed up in the words of the bland and charming physician of Norwich—"Man is the whole World, and the Breath of God; Woman the Rib and crooked piece of man."

Thus analysed, discussed and inquired into down the ages, the crooked piece has, so far, preserved a good-humoured, almost unbroken, and rather masterly silence. Man has always generalised about her; she has only very rarely generalised about man. Can this be because woman, for all her defects of intelligence and brain (and I don't think anyone would deny that she has, taking her and man at their average, the poorer and frailer brain, as she has undoubtedly the poorer and frailer body, nerves, and health; the fact of her greater longevity means merely, doctors say, that her arteries are less apt to harden, and that nature gave her a double dose of vitality, one for herself and one for her offspring; it implies neither health nor strength, and it is quite certain that the average woman is far more often ill, more easily thrown out of gear by nervous strain or shock, and generally less fitted to endure life, than the average man)—can it be that woman has one and one only intellectual superiority over man, a keener insight into, and a greater understanding of, individual human character? For any real perception of individual character must prevent these herdings and classifications—or rather, must modify them, showing the sex division, for instance, so cross-sectioned by individual temperament, heredity and the rest of it, that it becomes, as you point out, comparatively not significant (though I imagine that I might give more weight to it than you do). A mother who has brought up children cannot (unless she is an unteachable idiot) be for ever thinking "The boys are like this, the girls like the other," for one hour spent with them will show her rather that John and Joan are like this, Ann and Charles like the other. So let us grant the Rib her one mental superiority—she generalises less about human beings because it has been her business and her interest to study them more intensively; perhaps they matter to her more.

And so this book was (unless I am wrong) planned as a parody and a retort, to show man, if possible, how silly was this business which he has always been at. Has it been kept entirely on that plane? Or has a note of seriousness here and there broken in? If it has, and where it has, the writers have in my view given away their case, fallen beneath the intelligence of their sex. But for the most part they move, I think, very successfully on parody's plane. For, as in similar books by men, nearly everything they say of men and women could be as easily reversed. Except for Miss Delafield's agreeable George, who must, I think, retain his trousers eternally, all the gentleman studied in these essays (and they are all quite unlike one another) would walk as aptly in petticoats. Miss Ertz's party-going pleasurist, Miss Storm Jameson's irresponsible and helpless artist, spoused by a stolid and managing breadwinner wife (who sounds rather like George), Miss Simpson's collector (I assume that the fantastic statement "women never collect" is pure parody of masculine dicta), Miss Townsend Warner's maker of the moral law, Miss Rebecca West's religious fanatic (she, I think, walks most surely on the ground of parody)—all these recognisable human types can be called he or she according to your fancy, just as can the women studied in the investigations by men.

But in one particular the parody is unlike its models: it lacks their note of hostile unfriendliness. Men have, for the most part, written on women with dislike, malice, and contempt; nowhere in these essays is this returned. Those critics who have believed men to be attacked in this book have been misled by its wrapper and by their ideas of what would be likely. The note is kindly, even appreciative, almost throughout. This is an interesting and significant fact.

As to the question you raise, which sex is the more (unconsciously) comic, it is a nice point, but I should say on the whole women. Novelists and dramatists more easily, I think, create an absurd female than an absurd male character. But as to love—well, the hardness of your heart shocks and surprises me a little, if I may say so. Fools for love, whatever their sex, excite in me no mirth. On which perhaps rather smug boast I will end this already overlong letter.—Yours,

Rose Macaulay.

THE MASTERPIECE OF DE SANCTIS

History of Italian Literature. By Francesco De Sanctis. Translated by Joan Redfern. Oxford University Press. 2 Vols. 42s.

It is a sad reflection upon the interest taken by English-speaking peoples in Italian letters that an English translation of Francesco de Sanctis' *Storia della Letteratura Italiana*, which was published in 1870-71, should only now have been produced. Since the sheets of this translation were printed in the United States, we must assume that the primary credit for the repair of this omission does not rest on this side of the Atlantic: but that does not very much matter, and the translator, whether she be English or American, is to be congratulated on having very worthily, if a little prosaically, fulfilled her exacting task. The one blemish is that, whereas most extended quotations are given in both languages, the large quotations from Dante's *Divine Comedy* are only given in Cary's version.

Professor Croce strikes the right note by opening his short but pregnant introduction with the words:

> This book is one of the most notable works of literary history of the romantic and idealistic school, and may perhaps be regarded as its masterpiece,

and he goes on to give a description of this great work that cannot be bettered:

> So the *History of Italian Literature* of De Sanctis is first and foremost an intimate history of the Italian people. It begins with the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries when Italy was profoundly religious, and was alive with the political fervour that arose from the struggles of the free communes; from thence it passes to the age of the Renaissance when the spirit that prevailed was serene and ironic contemplation and realistic observation; and from thence to the spiritual debasement caused by the Catholic Counter-Reformation and the loss of national independence, a period that lasted from the second half of the sixteenth century to the end of the eighteenth; and it ends with the revival of spiritual life in Italy accompanied by the rise of the new science and philosophy and the progress of civil reform, which resulted in the renewal of Italian nationality that reached its culminating point in the nineteenth century. What this book aimed to be (and was) was an examination of the national conscience, a recognition of strength and weaknesses, a recalling of past glories and errors and also a warning.

It was unfortunate indeed for posterity that, owing to qualms on his publisher's part, De Sanctis had to compress all modern literature from Metastasio onwards into one final chapter. This chapter is a brilliant summary, but far too condensed for justice to be done to the period of the Romantic revival and its writers. If De Sanctis could have devoted to Foscolo, Leopardi and Manzoni, and to the ideas for which they stood, the space he was able to devote to earlier periods, this History would have been a still greater masterpiece. The deficiency, as Professor Croce points out, is to some extent completed in De Sanctis' later works.

This history of Italian literature, and the lectures delivered between 1839 and 1848 on which it was founded, have exercised an enormous influence upon the modern generation of Italian writers. Though it may be true to say, as Professor Croce does,

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that it had little effect in the day of its publication, a day of "philological and scientific reaction," and that it only rose to fame and gave birth to a new school after 1900, it must not be forgotten that it was one of the chief fountains from which Carducci, himself a great teacher, drew the inspirations for those lectures on Italian literature that made Bologna famous in the last decades of the nineteenth century; and it is not quite just to suggest that only when the Neapolitan school arose with Croce and Gentile, inspired like De Sanctis by Vico's philosophy, did this masterpiece bear fruit.

This, however, is not the place to discuss the influence of De Sanctis upon his country's literature and criticism, nor the æsthetic principles upon which his history is based. It is enough to say that no study of Italian literature is complete without a knowledge of this book, the like of which in masterly sweep and poetic penetration does not exist in our country. It is throughout refreshing, like a walking tour among mountains from which splendid views and noble peaks are clearly seen, and their general geography is made apparent. There is never a trace of pedantry, never a laborious tracing of "movements"; there are no dreary drawings-up of literary genealogies, no philological ambages, no waste of time with minor worthies, no lists of troublesome dates. Assisted, of course, by the very steeply contoured character of Italy's literary history, De Sanctis was able to group his material, as one might say, round natural landmarks, namely, the great poets and writers. Even those who think they know something about Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Machiavelli and Ariosto will find it more than worth while to accompany De Sanctis along that marvellous range and listen to what he says about its inner relations. If De Sanctis was good when he considered individual writers and works—how good only a reading of the pages on the *Divine Comedy* and Machiavelli will show—he was supremely good when he concentrated his attention on the points of transition. Instances of this excellence, since quotation is hardly possible, are the enlightening second chapter on the early Tuscan poets illustrating the profound remark that "Italian poetry was not born among the people, but in the schools, from St. Thomas and Aristotle, St. Bonventura and Plato"; in the opening of the chapter on the *Divine Comedy* and in the splendid close of its sixth section where, after recalling a few of the great figures in the Purgatorio, he says: "In that realm of the dead we feel for the first time the life of the modern world. . . . All is gigantic, and all is natural. And in the middle of it, the most infernal, the most alive of them all, towers Dante: pitiful, indignant, gentle, cruel, sarcastic, revengeful, fierce. . . . These mighty figures, standing there on their pedestals, are rigid and epic like statues; they are waiting for the artist who will take them by the hand and throw them into the turmoil of life, and make them into dramatic beings. And that artist was not an Italian: he was Shakespeare"; in the contrast between Petrarch and Dante and the melancholy end to that chapter where Petrarch is shown as the symbol of a new world, perfect on its surface, divided and feeble within; in the passage on the *Decameron* as the mirror of its time; in the page on Politian as the perfect expression of the polished, sensual Renaissance; in the whole chapter on Machiavelli; in the passages *apropos* of Tasso upon the Council of Trent, and in the sad comparison of the reawakened national spirit of other nations with the empty deadness of Italy; and in the remarkable chapter on "the New Science," *i.e.*, that of Bruno, Campanella and Vico, in which these lonely champions of philosophy are seen nobly contending for the truth in a country which pays them no attention, while all the rest of Europe rings with the names of Descartes, Locke, Berkeley and Pascal. This contemplation moves him to an outburst:

> And Italy? What was Italy doing in the face of this colossal movement of things and ideas? She was creating Arcadia. This was the real production of Italy's individual and moral existence. Her poets were singing of the Golden Age, and in the prevailing nullity of life were fabricating abstract themes and insipid amours of shepherds and shepherdesses. Her men of science, shutting their eyes to the world of their day, were busy with the world of the ancients and were scrutinising the relics of Rome and Athens from every possible angle. . . . Literature and science were Arcadian. And the central figure of all this world of Arcadia was Christina of Sweden. Incapable, poor woman, of understanding the great events in which her Gustavus and her Charles had taken so large a part, she had fled to Rome with her valuables. And she felt so happy in Rome with all those Arcadians, becoming their patroness, while they in sweet exchange called her the "divine" and the "immortal." Happy Christina! and happy Italy!

De Sanctis was a great spirit; his combination of reverence and indignation gives him a Dantesque quality at times. He has no patience with falterers or with those who stifle the aspirations of a people. Hence his bitterness against the Jesuits and the Arcadians of an earlier day, as against the *codini* of his own day who favoured the Bourbons and the Grand Dukes and supported the Pope against Cavour. In his lifetime he suffered for his political opinions, and he outlived the heroic age of the Risorgimento to which he belonged; yet this History amply shows that he was neither a fanatical nor a soured upholder of particular views and prejudices. He held the high view of Italy and her destinies that all her great poets have held from Dante down to Carducci, and did not hesitate to warn his compatriots, as all the great poets warned them, when they seemed inferior to their high traditions.

Orlo Williams.

THRALIANA

Johnson and Queeney. Letters from Dr. Johnson to Queeney Thrale. Edited by the Marquis of Lansdowne. Cassell. 45s.

There must have been, so we may surely conjecture, joy in Heaven, or at least a titter of amused expectancy, when the above-named brand-new bit of Thraliana came fluttering down through space and alighted upon the equivalent of a celestial bookshelf. For ever so long, in fact since 1788, as mortal men count time here below, all true Johnsonians knew that letters from their grimy but beloved demi-god to the eldest child (Hester Maria) of the lady Dr. Johnson loved had been in existence, and, which is more, had been carefully preserved by their recipient from the clutches of a mother who longed to include them in her

> Letters to and from the late Samuel Johnson, LL.D., to which are added Some Poems never before printed. Published from the original MSS. in her possession by Hester Lynch Piozzi, in Two Volumes, 1788.

But we also knew that though Johnson may have loved Mrs. Thrale, and showed it by writing to her more than three hundred letters, Mrs. Thrale's daughters did not share the same emotion, and were careful to keep their goods and chattels apart from the eager grasp of a publicity-loving parent. Queeney, we know from Mrs. Thrale's own pen, declined to part with Dr. Johnson's letters, and so, but for one tiny scrap of a notelet that has found its way into the pious keeping of Mr. R. B. Adam, of Buffalo, N.Y., no single one of Johnson's letters to his "sweet, dear, pretty little Miss" has ever been published until this very moment. Where have they been all these years, and how come they to have been thus preserved for our delectation to-day?

As already stated, Hester Maria Thrale, first called by Johnson "Queen Esther," and then shortened into "Queeney," was the first-born of the twelve children Mrs. Thrale's husband thought fit to impose upon his too-fruitful spouse. Of these twelve, four only lived to grow up, all girls; so, to the great grief of Dr. Johnson, Thrale had no son to inherit his vats. Boswell's feudal notions about land prevented his shedding even maudlin tears over this failure of a brewer's male issue.

Queeney, though born in 1764 and scarcely a year old when Johnson was first introduced to Streatham, postponed matrimony until she was forty-four, when she married Admiral Lord Keith, a widower of 20 years' standing with a grown-up daughter. It was no hasty affair, for the wedded pair had known one another for fourteen years. Lord Keith died in 1823 at his house at Tullyallan, in Scotland, and his good lady survived him 35 years. There was but one child of this union, a daughter Georgina, "the last of the Thrales," who, though twice married and an excellent horsewoman, had no children, so that when she died in 1902 her property, including Johnson's letters to her mother, passed to the descendants of Admiral Keith's first marriage, then represented by the late Lord Lansdowne. Tullyallan was sold in 1904, and the contents of its muniment-room, containing many Thraliana, brought to Wiltshire, where in the big house of Bowood they have ever since reposed. Big houses and quiet muniment-rooms have their uses, for which lovers of literature and old papers may, and ought, to be grateful.

And now for the letters themselves. They are thirty-one in number. The first is dated July 20th, 1772, when Hester was eight years old, a week after poor Mrs. Thrale had produced her seventh child, and the last is dated August 12th, 1784, four months before the writer's death on December 13th, 1784. We

BARRED
E. de NÈVE 7/6

"The agony of recollection has sustained the author from the first page to the last, so that in setting out to produce a piece of autobiography he has achieved a work of art . . . . The reader who can stand horror should not miss *Barred*, which, as Rossetti wrote, makes a goblin of the sun."—COMPTON MACKENZIE in the "*Daily Mail*."

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will give the first letter and then no more, for it would be a shame to rob so small a nest of more than one of its delicate eggs:

My sweet, dear, pretty little Miss, Ashbourn, July 20, 1771.

Please to tell little Mama that I am glad to hear that she is well, and that I am going to Lichfield and shall come soon to London. Desire her to make haste and be quite well for you know that you and I are to tye her to the tree, but we will not do it while she is weak. Tell dear Grandmama, that I am sorry for her pain. Tell Papa that I wish him joy of his new Girl, and tell Harry* that you have got my heart and will keep it, and that I am,

Dearest Miss,

Your Most Obedient Servant,

Sam Johnson.

Lord Lansdowne has contributed a short but informative introduction, and the book has twelve illustrations full of charm and interest. Good fortune seems to attend Dr. Johnson in the grave he dreaded so much, for with hardly an exception the copious library that has grown up around him and which owes all the inspiration it possesses to his affectionate nature, is everything the most ardent of his admirers could desire.

We doubt very much whether any such memorial exists to any human being as the three large volumes comprising the Catalogue of Mr. R. B. Adam's collection of "Johnsoniana."

Lord Lansdowne takes, and perhaps, considering the material at his disposal could hardly help taking, a harsh view of poor Mrs. Thrale's character and disposition.

In the course of his introduction he prints for the first time from the Bowood Papers a letter from Lady Keith to Fanny Burney, in which Queeney tells her friend of a visit she has just had (in 1813) from her youngest sister, Mrs. Mostyn, when the two ladies not unnaturally discussed between them their still living mother, for Mrs. Thrale did not depart this life until 1821. Lady Keith writes that Mrs. Mostyn was convinced that the injuries she and her sister had suffered from their mother proceeded from her "original and persevering dislike and real hatred of us all, and from her hatred of our father."

At this distance of time we can only hope that it was not quite so bad as all that, for when Mrs. Piozzi came to die near Bath, in 1821, her bedside was surrounded by her "weeping daughters," Lady Keith and Mrs. Hoare, whilst the only unmarried daughter, though absent at the beginning, arrived just before she expired. We are told that no one could have behaved with more tenderness and propriety than these ladies (see Abraham Hayward's *Life and Writings of Mrs. Piozzi*, Vol. 1, p. 215).

But however this may be, we confess our hatred, so far as we have any in a connection of this sort, is wholly reserved for Mr. Thrale, despite the fact there is no getting over that Dr. Johnson always regarded him with admiration. For our part we can see no good in him. Selfish, lecherous, gluttonous, unfaithful—if it be true that Mrs. Thrale hated him (for which there is little evidence) it would not be so very surprising. All the Thrales were queer creatures, and it is strange to think that but for Dr. Johnson most of us would never have heard of any one of them.

Augustine Birrell.

NEW INFLUENCES, NEW POETS

Seventeen Sonnets. By Monk Gibbon. Joiner and Steele. 3s. 6d.

The Loosening, and Other Poems. By Ronald Bottrall. Minority Press. 3s. 6d.

Rooming House. By Horace Gregory. Faber and Faber. 2s. 6d.

Poems. By Geoffrey Scott. Oxford University Press. 5s.

Poems. By Clere Parsons. Faber and Faber. 2s. 6d.

When Harold Munro, in the preface to his *Twentieth Century Poetry*, predicted that the chief influence in English poetry up to the year 1940 would be T. S. Eliot, he could not foresee that an immediate effect of his anthology would be in an opposite direction. For what surprised and delighted the readers of Munro's admirable collection was not the poetry of T. S. Eliot, but the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins. Many discovered Hopkins then for the first time, and thought of him less as a misplaced Victorian than as an astonishing new force in poetry. Whatever the reasons that made Bridges hoard his "lov'd legacy" for forty odd years, and then unload it—none too graciously—in 1918 on a world turning from war to jazz, there is no doubt that the publication misfired. Even to-day, though Hopkins is more read and admired than any other poet of the last sixty years except perhaps Hardy, he is the least discussed in print. This is presumably due to the timidity of critics, for there is plenty to discuss. In what other poet will you find that amazing rush of interlocked syllables (each syllable, almost, a picture), such lovely concentration of typically *ugly* English sounds, a texture so rich, varied and original? His landscape sonnets have the depth, the thick inwoven strokes of oil painting beside the water-colours of other poets. It is writing that must change the texture of future poetry as surely as the texture of modern music was changed by Debussy. Eliot's influence is of another sort. It can only be a vital influence on poets who share his learning and who go back to his sources. Few will do that, or would write good poetry if they did.

Traces of Hopkins can be found in the most unexpected places, in the work of poets who have little in common with him; his influence in fact is as a rule purely poetical. Mr. Monk Gibbon's *Seventeen Sonnets*, which are dedicated to the memory of Hopkins, have a closer adherence. At times he echoes too individual a turn of speech—"from that too great cloud stress," "Did God give—God have mercy—immortal soul?" He tends also to pile up words rather than give them movement, for which his verbal invention is not strong enough. The best of these sonnets (particularly numbers XI, XIV and XVI) are in a simpler, less close-packed style and rhythm, which while still owing something to Hopkins' later sonnets are free from oddity or imitation. Number XI, "Contend then, since contention seems in blood," has its general source, but is at the same time the direct and individual utterance of its author. Indeed, all through the book there is, perhaps surprisingly, an integrity of thought and style, despite approximations, which lifts it above pastiche. The same cannot be said of *The Loosening*, which echoes Eliot and Pound and has an unresolved ironic anguish of its own. "Given the moment I can echo a fashion," writes Mr. Bottrall; and he gives us two minor *Waste Lands*, one in Cracow and the other in London, and the more lyrical outburst ("a monumental yawn") of a curly bearded young man wearing corduroys and sandals in the British Museum. At his best he indicates vividly situations in which modern poetry might be written. Mr. Horace Gregory, though also at times the follower of Mr. Eliot, has a gusto coming apparently from *The Shooting of Dan Magrew* and *The Wild Party* which makes him remarkably readable and will no doubt give him the reputation as a poet which the highbrows once gave Gershwin as a musician. He has the merits of direct statement, fluency and colloquial vigour.

Geoffrey Scott (1885–1929) and Clere Parsons (1908–1931) were authentic poets. They left little; yet the outline of each talent is distinct. Geoffrey Scott's *Poems*, unrevised at the time of his death, are a great advance on his earlier volume. A paintbox prettiness has become the genuine beauty of a quiet and coloured imagination; the form is sparer, more fluid and vital; the impulse, though small, is achieved with a new steeling of fancy. He says of himself:

> . . . I go
> Lost in a landscape of the mind,
> A country where the lights are low
> And where the ways are hard to find,

and these dream-landscapes, "carved by the hard Cold chisel of dream," in lyric, sonnet and free ode-form have the impression of a difficult vision to which the poet has given clarity by the unsparing use of his art. The two longer poems in this book, *The Skaian Gate* and *The Map of Spells*, are impressive by their ampler proportion, but the quality of *Dawn Over Rome* and *In the Red Moon* and even the eight-lined *To W. H. Davies*, is essentially the same—an exquisite restrained use of dream-imagery:

> And thereupon,
> Silent, I saw a hand
> Draw some thin signs upon a wall of stone,
> Like fans of light
> Cast on a cold and rushy lake at night
> When a black gliding dab-chick wanders small
> To swim beneath the moon.
> Liquid the ripple ran,
> Quiet, and delicate and magical;
> And now 'twas lost,
> And now frond-fixed as in a kind of frost—
> Like coral antler on a scaly reef;
> And now took life within it, like a leaf
> By the slow sun unscrolling and enlarged,
> Vein from thin vein in perfect tracery. . .

* Henry Thrale, Mrs. Thrale's eldest son, born in 1767 and died seven years later.

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HARRAP

Clere Parsons attracts more by promise, but for me at least it is a strong attraction. None of his eighteen poems is quite a final achievement, and yet one is aware of an original and sensitive mind which is astonishingly at ease in its surroundings. *Suburban Nature Piece*, though marred by dissonances and a surfeit of epithets, combines its invocation of April with the suburban scene and the almost conversational reflections of the poet most gracefully. Even the light-handed *Restaurant*, which so many moderns have tried and botched, is sketched with just so much underlining as is needed. The subjects of these and of the other poems in the book are modern, modern by influence and in effect, and yet the modish signature does not obscure a fresh and genuine talent. G. W. Stonier.

AN AMERICAN RADICAL

The Story of My Life. By Clarence Darrow. Scribner's. 15s.

This rambling and amiable book is more the story of Mr. Darrow's mind and soul than of the physical details of his life. The reader gets a clear feeling of the author's personality; and it is a personality that will charm most people, even though they be hostile to Mr. Darrow's opinions. In discussing his methods as a criminal lawyer in the United States, Mr. Darrow writes, "If a jury wants to save the client they can find a good reason why they should, and will. The problem is to bring about a situation where court and jury want a lawyer's client to win." The ingratiating and sympathetic methods which he uses in court (with hostile witnesses or opposing lawyers), Mr. Darrow has applied to this book, with the result that the reader may be surprised at the theories with which he is made to feel sympathy.

The whole of Mr. Darrow's life, in deed and thought, can be related to three theses: first, that the person who is in trouble with society should be given the utmost sympathy and help; secondly, that if a man is to preserve his honesty and clarity of mind he must not seek political or financial success; thirdly, that there is no such thing as free will, since life is mechanically determined—from which it follows that religion is delusion, and right and wrong mere epithets of convenience. . . . It is a comment on the present state of affairs in America that Mr. Darrow, in a life devoted to defending the so-called enemies of the State, has almost always been on the side of the angels. Mr. Darrow has no illusions about himself, and admits that he defends the under-dog because of an emotional compulsion. The result, however, has been a noble life. Indeed, a rule-of-thumb for the lover of justice in modern America would be always to oppose what the State is trying to do. Of the many famous occasions on which Mr. Darrow has followed this rule, the only one for which he does not easily win the reader's sympathy is his defence of Leopold and Loeb—the two rich Chicago boys who killed a younger playmate, ostensibly because they wondered what it felt like to murder and whether they could commit the "perfect crime."

Mr. Darrow's second thesis may be summarised in his own words: "Most people who follow a political career grow to be cowards or slaves; for that matter, so do men who sell prunes." Moralists have generally agreed that buying and selling are none too good for the soul; but a State is in a bad way when its leading men refuse public service on the grounds that venality and cowardice are the prerequisites for that career. But this is precisely what Mr. Darrow has done. He allowed himself to be elected to the State legislature of Illinois, largely to make sure that his opinion of politics was correct. He found that is was.

> Every session was opened with prayer, and then a large part of the assembly proceeded to look around to find someone to hold up. . . . There was the usual number of bills to unjustly tax railroads, telegraph companies, and other corporations. . . . I knew that they were the usual bills introduced to make the corporations pay money for their defeat. I invariably fought them and urged the corporations not to spend money for the tribute. I soon discovered that no independent man who fights for what he thinks is right can succeed in legislation.

Mr. Darrow refused to stand for the Mayoralty of Chicago. He had seen enough of politics; and his faith in the common people was only tepid. "I always fear that I am playing a part," he writes, "or catering, when the approval is too general and evident, because most people do not think and, as Ibsen said, 'the majority is always wrong'." When Mr. Darrow found

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himself agreeing with the American public about Germany's war-guilt, he was almost unnerved. "If I was right," he asks, "how came it that the majority was on my side? . . . So I set to work to re-examine the whole case."

Mr. Darrow's kindliness and good will toward men is amusingly shown in the way he applies his determinism. Theoretically, his belief in determinism is absolute—which means that blame and praise should be equally *de trop*. In practice, however, it is only blame that is excluded from Mr. Darrow's world. When he alludes to a certain Harry Orchard (who was not only a foe of one of Mr. Darrow's causes, but a self-confessed professional dynamiter who had murdered dozens of men) Mr. Darrow writes: "I have always been sorry for Harry Orchard. . . . Harry Orchard, like all other men, was the product of the forces that control everything that exists. It is idle to think that he had anything to do with the origin of himself and his destiny, etc." But when he writes of his friend, John P. Altgeld (a noble character who strayed into Illinois politics, became governor of the State, and was then ruined politically and financially for pardoning some men unjustly convicted of murder), Mr. Darrow does not feature the irresponsibility of man. He does not chide us for making a hero of Altgeld; he joins us in salutary admiration for moral worth. Altogether, an endearing man, if a grossly illogical thinker, emerges from *The Story of My Life*.

MR. GARNETT LEARNS TO FLY

A Rabbit in the Air. By David Garnett. Chatto and Windus. 5s.

It is perhaps too much to expect that a great new outburst of physical activity should be immediately followed by a satisfying record of its experience. And yet it is difficult not to feel a little disappointed at the literature which aviation has produced. The poetry of flight is not an empty phase; many books have attempted its celebration; and yet it has not hitherto produced a poet, or even a prose writer of the first rank. And now the first great adventure is over. We drive on with the military and commercial development of these surprising machines; our eyes are on the heroes who exhaust themselves and their stunt aircraft in knocking a day off the record from London to Sydney or Cape Town. In a few years, learning to fly will be as perfunctory a business as learning to drive a motor car. Have we rushed ourselves into the air at such a pace that nobody has had the talent and the time to get down on paper what it really feels like to fly (and not merely to fly in) an aeroplane?

Fortunately, not. Mr. Garnett has recently got his pilot's certificate, and has kept a diary of the process. He represents himself as a middle-aged person who took up flying one afternoon when out for a walk with his wife and was such a muff at it that he almost abandoned his training in despair. Here, he says to other middle aged aspirants, is my record: you can't do worse than this. That is one side of the story, and his diary, with its taut, monotonous record of the struggles of a highly strung tyro to glide at the correct angle, turn without stalling and land without somersaulting, fully bears this out. But if Mr. Garnett established something like a record in taking twenty-eight hours to get to his solo, he arrived with great news, and an unequalled power of communicating it. In this book he stands midway between the dumb who know and the romantically garrulous who do not know the essential thrill of mastering the instinctive control of an aeroplane. He would have got his certificate sooner if he had kept his eye in the boat. But his eye strayed to seize and record a new vision of heaven and earth. The first fruits of that errantry was the lovely and exciting story of a wrecked flight. *A Rabbit in the Air* consolidates the experience without which *The Grasshoppers Come* could hardly have been written. It even allows the curious inquirer to pursue some of the puzzles of Mr. Garnett's literary method. For the voice of the first record of his personal experience is the same voice—nervous, quiet, ironical, and detached—which achieves the deadly economy of his most fantastic tales.

Lady into Fox, A Man in the Zoo, A Rabbit in the Air—it is not for nothing that these titles are bald statements of fantastic transformation and incredible departures. Mr. Garnett's *métier* is the fairy tale without the fairy. After his imagination has brooded, the unnatural merges in the natural. He will not be surprised, whatever happens; he will not let his reader be surprised. An unimaginative man could and did enjoy the tragic adventure of Mr. and Mrs. Tebrick, but he was not permitted the luxury of ejaculating "Nonsense": he could only look across apprehensively at his wife. This characteristic of Mr. Garnett's talent finds a contrary employment when confronted with an established revolution in the conventional order of things, and it is natural that he should become passionately attached to aeroplanes. Rabbits have actually got into the air. They have done it so quickly that they have hardly noticed the marvels of their situation. And Mr. Garnett, following them, and being painfully convinced of his rabbithood, tells them exactly where they are and what they have done. The more technical details of his diary will be received with delight by hosts of uncommunicative men who have trained on Moths and Bluebirds. But the full power and beauty of the book can only be rendered by quotation from a descriptive passage. This is what Mr. Garnett makes of the Moth's spin:

> We had plenty of height left and I repeated the spin except that for the first time, I did a left-hand spin. The stateliness was marvellous. I suppose it was the slots which had damped out that sudden tigerish leap of the Bluebird. But in spite of that it was the greatest pleasure I have had flying for a long time now. The sense, first of power, and then of complete abandonment to the will of the machine, is wonderful. The slowly rotating earth coming towards you as you hang over it, is a perfect jewel; there is a feeling of freedom which was first experienced by the revolted angels cast out of Heaven. They came down in spins. After the spins we practised steep turns, in which the elevater is used to turn the machine and the rudder to keep the nose up. Then we had one more long exhilarating spin from 2,000 feet, and a glide down to a bad landing.

It has been my endeavour for some time past to understand the mechanics of the spin and get it under control. Mr. Garnett's mechanics are, no doubt, celestial, but he almost persuades me that I waste my time.

Barrington Gates.

THE PRINTER'S ART

Typography. By Eric Gill. Sheed and Ward. 25s.
The Flute. By H. J. C. Grierson. Samson Press. 15s.
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Comus. By John Milton, illustrated by H. Blair Stanton. Gregynog Press. £1 15s.
The Fables of Æsop. Translated by W. Caxton, illustrated by A. Miller Parker. Gregynog Press. £5 5s.

A book of precept, and seven books of practice: but the preceptor's book is by one of the greatest living practitioners in the art which he discusses. It is an art which has votaries who to-day have rare opportunities for acquiring beautiful examples of printing: but I wish that Mr. Gill had recognised that many who love fine printing also practise, perhaps secretly, the vice of bibliography. His book—and for certain it is no accident, but to annoy the collector—has at least three titles. On the dust-cover it is called *Printing and Piety: An Essay on Life and Work in the England of* 1931, *and particularly Typography*: this excellence, which would have made a splendid title-page, is nowhere repeated. It is only on that destructible wrapper, with also a fair design, in red and black, of Mr. Gill, disguised as the Dog-Leopard of the Lord, guarding the Burning Bush. On the spine of the casing the lettering is bluntly *Gill: Typography*. There is no title-page, but in a declaration of the book's contents, just before signature "a," is printed *An Essay on Typography by Eric Gill, comprising* . . . and then follow the titles of the chapters. So let the diligent cataloguer list the book under three separate headings. The book is the first production of a new press, and is printed by Mr. Hague and Mr. Gill. The type, page-arrangement and devices (for example, the cunning system of contractions) are excellent; but the press-work of the book is not altogether satisfactory. But what a splendid little book it is! Here are sense and strength of a quality rarely found in modern writing about art. Mr. Gill is as far removed

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The essay is practical as only an essay based on first principles can be. Mr. Gill knows and can persuade an intelligent reader that the making of good books depends, first, on a certain philosophy, a philosophy which boldly declares that "ultimately there is no happiness in a world in which things are not as good as they can be." The strongest argument for the work of the "private" press is that quite evidently a number of people wish to be printers, wish to exercise that craft not merely for a living, but regarding it as *opus*, not *labor*. Here, for instance, are two books from the youngest of our presses—the Samson, controlled by Miss Grierson and Miss Shelmerdine. I would like to congratulate them first on their courage in printing new, original work. Too many of our fine printers rely on reprints. Of these two books have been printed 120 copies of Mr. Grierson's translations, 110 of Mr. Muir's poems; the type is Caslon Old Face, and in Mr. Muir's poems blue is used for the initials. It would be unfair to expect perfect press-work in their first efforts, but on the whole the books are very treasurable. Quite apart from their typographical interest they should find a quick sale among the discriminating: Mr. Grierson's versions, mostly from the Dutch, are exceptional in their success in capturing the poetic in the work he is rendering; Mr. Muir's poems have a vigour and an imaginative appeal all the greater in that he does not endeavour to tickle us with obscurity.

The book, as did the printed letter, came from man's handwriting, as Mr. Gill never lets us forget; and when man wrote for other purposes than mere utility he began to decorate his writing. In the same way, it is natural to decorate the printed book. To decorate does not mean to farse a book with drawings, to comment on it, to criticise it, or to bedizen it with ornament—though all these have been done. A book's decorations should be an integral part of the page; and if one is lucky in the decorator will be an imaginative interpretation of the text. I had better say plump out that Mr. Gill's edition of *The Four Gospels* is the most beautiful, the greatest piece of work yet produced by the revival of printing. I cannot believe that anyone will refuse it priority over the Kelmscott *Chaucer*; it has no other rival, except possibly the Cranach *Hamlet*, but that is *tour de force*, while Mr. Gill's book is as simple, as natural, as it is splendid. His wood-engravings are as profound, as poignant as anything he has done in stone or in wood; and the way in which the decorations live in the text, aid it and are aided by it, is, so far as I know, unexampled. The typography and press-work of the book are perfect: the only criticism I have to make is that the paragraph sign is a little too black for the frequent repetition it sometimes has. I wish it could have been printed in the blue so successfully used by the Golden Cockerel Press in other of their books. One word more—the Golden Cockerel must be congratulated on the making not only of the finest book of our time, but of the cheapest. In its half-leather binding this folio is an extraordinary bargain; if there are any of the 500 copies left, the judicious will sell their match or oil shares and buy them. The chief attraction of Mr. Driberg's translation from the African is Mr. Gibbings' lively and entrancing engravings—he is always at his happiest among natural objects, and in these interpretative drawings he is spirited and at ease. Mr. Driberg's poems have a certain charm, but they are rather monotonous in technique, and seem to lack the abruptness of primitive speech and emotion.

Few private presses have accomplished more individual work, or gained a higher reputation for sound printing than the Welsh house of Gregynog, founded by the enterprise and national enthusiasm of the Misses Davies. Mr. R. A. Maynard and Mr. H. A. Bray, who are no longer associated with the press, produced as a swan-song the magnificent edition of Mr. Murray's translation of *Euripides*. It is magnificent; but it will not count among their most successful efforts as a piece of book making. They were hampered, to begin with, by the dramatic form, and I am sure they did not find the solution of the difficulty when they decided to print each character's name, in large capitals, in the middle of the page above the speeches. The result is a page terribly broken. The characters' names should have been at the side. The decorations, after Greek vase paintings, are an attempt to translate into one medium what belongs irretrievably to another. Still, the printing is as fine as Mr. Maynard's work can be, and many will desire these two handsomely produced volumes. Mr. William McCance is now director of the Gregynog, and with him as decorators are Mr. Hughes Stanton, Miss Gertrude Hermes and Miss Agnes Miller Parker. Anyone familiar with modern engraving will know that this means that the Welsh press has the assistance of some of the most original and imaginative engravers at work in this country. The *Comus*, the first book under the new management, is not altogether a success. Mr. Stanton's engravings are witty and decorative but a little light in feeling for Milton; the frontispiece, a spirited image of Comus, must be excepted from this. For Miss Parker's decorations for *Æsop*, and Mr. McCance's initials, I have nothing but praise. If any book has a right to be a picture book it is *Æsop*; and never have I seen illustrations more truthful, quicker at interpretation, livelier in apprehension than these beautiful things of Miss Parker's. She is not quite so good with men and women as with animals, but all her drawings of animals have a delicious, lively quality. This book, of which there are only 250 copies, is bound in natural sheepskin, printed in Bembo type on a particularly soft and gracious paper, specially made.

R. E. R.

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A day will doubtless come when the seated figure of Albert, under his attendant Virtues and Sciences in Kensington Gore, will again receive the solid casing of gilt in which he shone until some fifteen years ago. It is ironical, if it be true, that the Prince Consort was thus stripped of his gilding in order to diminish his visibility as a potential guide for German bombers. But meanwhile Mr. Hector Bolitho has provided a conscientious and well documented biography of the Prince which, if democracies were capable of retrospective gratitude to their governors, should make the Office of Works hasten to restore a glory too hurriedly scraped off.

True, there is an anomaly in the presentation of Mr. Bolitho's book. For in its outward appearance, decorated with a "so-quaint, so-amusing" series of colour prints of the cottage parlour variety, it comes near to perpetuating the tiresome picture of Albert as a figure of fun for the nineteen-twenties. But the reader will soon be reassured, if only by Mr. Bolitho's courtier-like dedication (with Coburg arms) and by the genealogical table over three feet long, that this is a serious piece of biographical work—a little over-tender in its cadenced style, perhaps, but, nevertheless, careful in its detail and sympathetic in its feeling for the period and its problems. And such a book was overdue. The figure of Albert embalmed in Sir Theodore Martin's five massive volumes is so static and gigantic that it is hard to grasp the human reality that must have lain behind it. Martin, emphatically, was not a good biographer: he toiled for years and years, planned a three-volume life, and yet, when forced into a fourth volume, was still lamenting that he was "in the position of one who, in climbing some great mountain, finds steep emerging upon steep before him." Mr. Bolitho reduces the unmanageable Titan to human dimensions; and anyone interested in Victorian history will be grateful to him.

Yet there still remains something inhuman about the Prince Consort. He is still a little incredible. We are not accustomed to such perfection of princeliness amongst our royalties. Amongst all those black or colourless sheep of the later Hanoverians, could this Coburg lamb be really so snowy white? His own flock, after all, had its shady members. But the closer we look, the clearer it becomes that Albert *was* Good. His innate virtues and gifts were consciously and conscientiously disciplined, developed, and directed; and if he is open to reproach or blame it is nearly always for the very excess of his good qualities—his solemnity, the overplus of his seriousness; his pedantry, the overplus of his good taste—and certainly not for selfish, indulgent, lazy, or, least of all, malevolent conduct. Occasionally one may detect an inner indulgence, a disposition to enjoy the pains of his martyrdom at times when his unmerited, but quite comprehensible, unpopularity struck at his kindly heart. But how small a matter that is! If Albert is to be blamed, it cannot

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really be on personal grounds. The dynastic scheming of Leopold of Belgium pushed him, almost imperceptibly, into the cruelly anomalous position of the foreign consort of a crowned queen, in a country of which it took him years to acquire even a moderate understanding. The man who could carry off such a position must either be rigidly self-effacing, acting as hardly more than the monarch's husband, or, to be consort as well, must have a fine flexibility of temperament and a rich store of *bonhomie*. These were not in Albert's being. He had dignity and determination, and the gift for concentrated application which makes a great civil servant. But the virtues of the civil servant were not exactly what England looked for, and Albert had to pay the penalty of her ingratitude.

Mr. Bolitho has proportioned his study well, dividing his attention between the public and the private life of the Prince. He writes with freshness on some topics that have become hackneyed—the Great Exhibition, for instance, and the education of the Prince of Wales; and he has been able to produce a certain amount of new material from the family archives in Coburg. For twenty years the Prince Consort kept up a steady correspondence from England with his brother Ernest, and he seems to have spoken fully and frankly about men and affairs. These letters have been placed at Mr. Bolitho's disposal, and he has made good use of a valuable source. In fact, he has written as good a life of Prince Albert as we are likely to have for some time.

Hamish Miles.

MEN, WOMEN, AND SHIPS

Home for the Holidays. By R. H. Mottram. Chatto and Windus. 6s.

The Way of the Phoenix. By Stephen McKenna. Chapman and Hall. 7s. 6d.

The Maiden. By Myrtle Johnston. Murray. 7s. 6d.

Props. By Naomi Jacob. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.

One Who Loved. By D. L. Adler Hobman. Goldston. 6s.

Full Board. By Margery Maitland Davidson. Duckworth. 7s. 6d.

Immortal John. By Renée Haynes. Harmsworth. 7s. 6d.

Heart's Harrow. By Jean Fayard. Trans. by Warre B. Wells. Mathews and Marrot. 7s. 6d.

Women and Ships. By Morley Roberts. Grayson. 7s. 6d.

Sailors are simple souls; there seems no other explanation of the fact that they insist on regarding ships as feminine, and investing them with an air of difficulty and mystery with which, by a curious and long-lived convention, all women are supposed to be surrounded. Perhaps the easiest way to escape from solving the problem of a thing which is hard to manage is to invest it with inexplicable caprices, to pretend that there is a "something" about it too mysterious for the mind of mere man to plumb. This convention has dogged even those writers who disprove it in their writings, let alone the fiction-mongers to whom it is a godsend which accounts for many convenient and improbable happenings; that it does, in the better novels of to-day, show some signs of disappearing is one of the few hopeful things about them.

Mr. Mottram, although an instinctive conservative in his art, is not deceived by it. The characters in this slight, if a trifle ineffective, story are crystal-clear. The Victorian father and mother, the three children, the actress aunt, the earnest and unpleasant undergraduate with his creed of "Beauty is Irritation," are carefully dissected and put together again; or—a better metaphor—*Home for the Holidays* is like a small strip cut from a bigger film and shown in slow motion. The people in it are terrifyingly normal, and at the same time a little unnatural. The background against which they move, however, is admirably done, and the film is at least "shot" in an interior which is memorable for its careful accuracy.

The same feeling of perhaps unjustifiable disappointment is aroused by Mr. McKenna's new novel. Here again there is none of the bad conjurer's attempt at mystery: the author sees through his puppets unerringly, and Rhoda is depicted with astonishing skill. The whole story, however, covering the history of the Dermott family just before, during, and just after the war, gives an impression of coldness and detachment; the author has erected an impressive façade; but is there anything behind it? Mr. McKenna's honesty of characterisation and extreme competence make anything he writes eminently readable, and his account of post-war disintegration is as good as anything he has done; the Dermotts inevitably invite comparison with the Forsytes, and they do not always come off second best.

Miss Johnston, again, treats both the sea and the woman who is the leading character in her book with the same realism, and yet achieves an effect of grim romance. Maria, dressed as a man, sails as a mate on a sailing ship, and becomes captain of a crew which has turned into pirates. The hardships of her childhood, the cruelty of her life at sea, her eventual attainment of a safe harbour, are related in an uncompromising narrative, with the style of which readers of *Hanging Johnny* will be familiar. That the tale remains credible and that, at the same time, the atmosphere of romantic adventure is preserved is due to the fact that all the characters are made to seem explicable and are conscientiously explained; the reader is left with no illusions about the men, women and ships of which Miss Johnston writes—psychology has changed all that.

Props and *One Who Loved* are both concerned with Jews, the former with a German Jew who became a naturalised Englishman and the latter with a German Jewess whose salon was the most important of many in Germany at the beginning of last century. Miss Jacob has drawn a full-length portrait of Hermann Franck, with his taste for music and his fatal weakness of allowing others to rule his life. His friends, his unhappy marriage with a Gentile wife, his relationship with his son, are all sketched cleverly, and his final freedom, when at last he stands alone in the world, is powerfully depicted. Miss Jacob is less detached than either Mr. McKenna or Miss Johnston, and the fact that her own sympathies appear to be involved makes her characters more human but less significant; Leah, indeed, the woman with whom Hermann falls in love, but who dies suddenly, is made unnecessarily mysterious, with the result that she is little more than a lay figure who seems to have been introduced to suit the convenience of the plot, instead of being vital to Hermann's development. *Props* is certainly worth reading, if only for its study of the relationship between Jew and Gentile. The same relationship is important in *One Who Loved*, which though in fiction form is no more than a biography of Rahel Levin, the admirer of Goethe and the friend of Heine, Hegel and Madame de Stael. The author says that she has taken the novel-form as his drum, "because it seemed to me the best way of giving motion to Rahel," and those who agree with Rahel herself when she declares, "I have said for a long time that nearly all historians bore me completely; only brief true chronicles and gossipy memoirs are readable," may sympathise with the author's plea. Often, however, Miss Hobman does not seem quite certain whether she is writing a novel or not, and the resultant haze obscures her portrait of Rahel. The book is based on historical documents, and has some value for the student of Goethe and his times.

Miss Davidson also has not altogether shaken off the hypothesis of feminine mystery, but her simple story of a boarding house does not ask to be taken too seriously. The odd behaviour of the inmates forms the theme of a well-told but superficial tale which invites no mental effort. It is still more difficult to take any interest in Miss Haynes' John, a peculiarly stupid young man who attempts to apply the abstract theories of Communism to the very concrete facts of his own life. He "marries a girl of the people," speaks in Hyde Park, is involved in the general strike, and at the end is comforted because his baby son is alive, although his wife has died in giving birth to it. John is not a credible character, and this fact ruins what might have been an interesting theme.

With M. Fayard we are back again in the mystery thesis. The description of the wrapper of *Heart's Harrow* as a "love story pure and simple" invites the retort that it is neither one nor the other; it is the story of a man's lust for a woman of loose morals, told with the traditional French "realism" and "logic" and without any distinction of style or matter. That this dull book should have been awarded the Prix Goncourt reflects criticism on the donors rather than credit on the recipient. It is a relief to turn to Mr. Morley Roberts' book, which is in the form of a series of anecdotes told by Geordie Armstrong, a sturdy old seaman, whose views on men, women and ships are coarse, forcible and refreshing. Less humorous, perhaps, than Mr. W. W. Jacobs, Mr. Roberts lacks nothing of vigour, and Geordie's tales are excellent; as the old ruffian says of his "missis," they are a "rare good sort."

BUTTERWORTH

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And No Birds Sing. By Pauline Leader. Routledge. 7s. 6d.

To Whom It May Concern. The Story of Victor Ilyitch Scroff. By M. R. Werner. Cape. 10s. 6d.

Both Miss Leader and Mr. Scroff have this in common; they are young artists who—as far as internal evidence shows—have hardly yet succeeded and have turned to autobiography as an escape. They are also both, as emigrants from their land of origin, rootless and typically contemporary products; and their experience is the outcome of early violence. Autobiography for them may be an effort to create a personality and to send out roots. With Miss Leader, an American poetess, the child of immigrant Jewish parents, the more immediate incentive is the old one: our friend the acute inferiority complex. Her book is the refuge of the thwarted and wretchedly self-conscious soul breaking through the murk of inferiority to insist aggressively and sometimes hysterically that the world shall know who and what she is. Her chief longing was to be assimilated to the American standard, to be like American girls and to be accepted by them, but she was cut off from her fellow Americans at first through being a "dirty Jew" and later by complete deafness. The dominating factor in her early life was her mother, a woman of great animal vitality who concealed her inward sorrows under a show of brutality, and who maintained the family first by running an open air meat market, and then a sordid apartment house. Both parents beat their child—so that on one occasion the police were called upon to interfere. When illness and deafness came—this episode is excellently described and with an unusual gentleness—she was useless to her parents, more than ever at their mercy, mocked by the other children and helpless herself. She ran away with the few poems she had written to New York where she knew no one but a writer. He told her the poems were interesting but no more, and quickly dropped her as likely to become a nuisance. It was almost impossible for a deaf girl, crippled by shame as she was, to get work. But she managed to get jobs as a dish washer, and in a dress shop and a bookbinder's. They were all "sweat shops." Eventually she came to frequent a cafeteria used by artists and writers—she blundered into it and knew nobody—and the description of herself sitting there alone night after night watching them and unable to hear a word, is very moving. She became friends with a prostitute who is one of the few people in the book unobscured by the writer's pitiable self-consciousness. Here is her description:

> Meanwhile she wrote bits of her life to me on paper napkins, with her eye on the door for possible customers. Only in this way did she betray her profession. Her eye was something by itself, hardly human, that went to the door out of habit.

One cannot trust entirely the vision of such a neurotic observer, but the book is a genuine if oppressive document redeemed by its vividness and vitality. It is not easy to forget this woman beating in vain against her prison walls.

Mr. Seroff's book is also the fruit of violence—the violence of war and revolution which drove him from an already uneasy childhood in Batoum to Constantinople, Vienna, Paris and the circle of Isadora Duncan. It is a much more mature and finished piece of work than Miss Leader's, though less sensitive. He assumes an air of imperviousness, there is scarcely a breath of emotion in his narrative. No doubt its possible crudities have been smoothed away by the editor—for that is presumably Mr. Werner's role. Mr. Seroff's adventures are external. He is not in the least subjective. He has the naive and not unpleasant self-importance of the provincial young man become cosmopolitan. We begin with the innocent schoolboys of Batoum who carried knives and revolvers, stabbed their teachers and planned revolutions; and from this it is an easy stage to the anarchy that followed when one army after another took possession of the city. He fled with other refugees to Constantinople where for a time he lived in a brothel and acted as an interpreter to the British military police who broke up the riots among soldiers and harlots. Life in Constantinople was a continuous scramble for stolen provisions, jobs and bribes. In Vienna the glare diminishes and the temperature cools; in Paris there is Montparnasse and a long drawn out love affair with an American girl who was a puzzle to the author and is rather a bore to the reader, who is baffled by a transition to alternating vagueness and candour. Finally there is an intimate account of Isadora Duncan's last years, the whole unhappy, mad story of debts, extravagance, persecution, misery and hysteria. The book rarely fails in its interest, and if we feel at the end we know very little except the façade of so detached and cool an author, the variety of his adventures is immense. One's instinct, after reading these autobiographies, is to call for clothes for the naked and to order the carefully dressed to be stripped—a human being's autobiography is either a too deceptive or a too pitiless valet.

V. S. Pritchett.

THE POET'S WALK

The New Shepherd. By A. J. Young. Bumpus. 3s. 6d.

Between the willing poet and the willing reader, like two people who have expressed a desire to meet, an introduction is easily effected; there is a quick common property of ideas, which have depended as much on the one as on the other for their existence. But with some poets, and particularly the modern poet of nature, the reader's importance is diminished; they speak more to themselves and are slow to be heard. Mr. Young is one of them. The considerate author who keeps putting himself in and out of his reader's shoes is not in question here; the poet finding common ground with his reader is not this poet. He makes no cheerful salute to the passer-by over the way denoting his consciousness of the existence of a friend, a sharing of the day, the hour, the occasion. There is no one on the other side of the road; and one may cheerfully utter the sinister prophecy that he will in one sense never have readers: not quite that relationship is set up. For here is a poet writing with so separate and individual a concentration that the reader has to go out of his *métier* and become something else; he has to identify himself to such an extent with the author that he becomes not much less than author himself; Mr. Young therefore makes authors rather than readers.

It may be wondered how a poet whose reputation is being made by the exact rightness of his eye for nature can yet be so stamped with his own elusive individuality. For the farther a man goes in objective accuracy the farther he may be said to step out of himself into the common truth. And certainly there is an easy sharing of common truth when Mr. Young speaks with his unerringly right word of the tree's creeping shadows, "Quietly obsequious to the time-keeping sun"; or of "the late sunrise Tangling its rainbows on my eyes"; or of the ruin of the Fallen Tree that will "leave behind Nothing but smoke that by the wind Distracted is not smoke." There is quick recognition by the reader, too, for the newness beneath one's feet by the sea:

> How strange to walk that shore
> No foot had ever trod before
> Or since the sea drew back the tide.

or, in "An Evening Walk," that the people met stepping westwards with the light on their faces should be "these travelling saints"; or for the winter picture:

> Though in the balk
> Ice doubles every lump of chalk
> And the frost creeps across
> The matted leaves in silver moss,
> Here where the grass is dank
> The sun weeps on this brightening bank.

But all the same the reader will occasionally feel his own identity not taken into account, and denied; that little margin of allowance that is usually made for one identity by another Mr. Young does not make. The reader must therefore take proportionally extra strides towards him—a stride into exactly his love and knowledge of nature, and another into his identical consciousness of prehistoric England, and a third into precisely the economy of style that he uses. Not unmanageable strides, these, for all here is on a small scale; there is no sustained feat of poetry, but only those brief incidents and accidents of poetic thought that are like the mere examples a mind gives of itself. And brief thought is whittled down to briefer words. For Mr. Young in this is like the great poet of whom it was remarked that just as the human body taken apart could never be assembled again in so small a compass, in the same way if one of the poet's lines were upset no hand but his could fit the meaning back into the same space.

But to the reader who does adopt this writer's individuality in this and his other small collections of poems, the suspicion will come that it is this very necessity to live entirely another's life with nature that provides a singularly fascinating experience. Let Mr. Young after all make no concessions and continue in

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his solitary wood, speaking to himself, not altering a tone or a word for the enlightenment of any who may overhear :

> An old, old man who with bent knee
> And doubled back
> Creeps under boughs that overlean his track,

but who

> Stands upright again
> Where caterpillars drop like rain
> From hazel boughs
> Whose mealy leaves hang bare and ruinous,

and who turns an eye "At every sound Alert as a bright light-spot on the ground." To walk with him has all the odd and stealthy interest of shadowing someone unaware of your presence ; it means following almost with distrust the steps that leave the path, stopping where you would not think to stop and passing on where you would pause. You will have been another person walking the wood. Sometimes only your eyes are new ; at other times from your eyes the newness flies to your fancy, as in the end of the poem called "The Pines" :

> The hurricane of snow last night
> Felled one ; its roots surprised by light
> Clutch at the air in wild embrace ;
> Peace like an echo fills the place
> Save for the still rustle of snow,
> That falling flake on flake below
> The torn limbs and the red wounds stanches
> And with a sheet the dead trunk blanches
> And lays white delicate wreaths among the branches.

Viola Meynell.

A WORLD OF VALUE

Ethics. By Nicolai Hartmann. Volume I, *Moral Phenomena*. Volume II, *Moral Values*. Translated by Stanton Coit. Allen & Unwin. 12s. 6d.

Fundamentals of Ethics. By Wilbur Marshall Urban. Allen & Unwin. 12s. 6d.

There has arisen in recent years what amounts to a new branch of philosophy, the philosophy of value. In addition to Metaphysics, Logic and Ethics, there is now "Axiology," the science of, or inquiry into value, a subject upon which more books have appeared during the last five years than on any other aspect of philosophy.

The interest in Axiology testifies to a renaissance of Platonism, for Plato more than any other philosopher stressed the reality, the absolute reality of the Beautiful, the Good, and the True. These values, he suggested, inhabit a world of their own, a world which, perfect and changeless, forms a standard for our own which is imperfect and changing. They are the source of such worth as we recognise in good acts and beautiful objects, and, through a study of the things in this world which reflect and manifest these values, we may come obscurely to know them.

The appeal of this doctrine, long recognised in its application to beauty—the view of art which defines æsthetic merit in terms of what we happen to like or dislike, as if there were no more objective value about the beauty of a picture than about the sweetness of a strawberry, is so palpably inadequate that nobody outside a philosophical class-room ever really holds it—has been obscured in its bearing upon moral philosophy by the teaching of Kant. As Professor Muirhead points out in his Introduction to Professor Hartmann's *Ethics*, under Kant's influence, thinkers both in England and America have taken for nearly a hundred years "the idea of self-realisation as the ultimate end of action and the standard of reference in moral judgment." It is impossible to rid such a theory of the taint of egoism. If you hold that the development of the self is the end of moral action, your ideal does not become any less selfish because you sternly set your face against the identification of the end with pleasure.

In contradistinction to this attitude, the modern theory of value in ethics emphasises the non-personal, even the non-human character of moral good. "Ethics," as Professor Urban says, "has come to be recognised as part of a general theory of value." It is concerned, in Professor Hartmann's words, less with "an analysis of the moral consciousness and its acts" than with "the objective contents of moral claims, commandments and values." Professor Hartmann, like Plato, thinks of the universe as a depository of values ; they are literally *there* in the world, objective factors of what is, not created or even projected by the human consciousness, but revealed to minds properly trained in a moment of direct insight. "To wheel the soul round from the perishing world" to "the contemplation of the real world and the brightest part thereof"—the phrase is Plato's—is, Professor Hartmann agrees, the purpose of moral training and discipline. Moral education is a process of so refining and clarifying the soul that it may come to know the values in things ; and, such is their compelling power, to know is to desire and to pursue. "Ethical man" is "the seer of values" ; he is further described as being their "taster."

One of the most valuable discussions in the book turns on the question of the subjective element in valuation. That moral codes and customs differ is notorious ; what is a vice to one is a sacred obligation to another, while the variations in æsthetic taste from age to age and from person to person are infinitely diverse. Hence, many have argued, the notions of good and beautiful are merely subjective ; "good" is the name which we give to the conduct of which we happen to approve, "beautiful" to the works of art which give us pleasure. But this, says Professor Hartmann, is to confuse the appraisement of a thing with the thing appraised ; it is as if one were to argue from the fact that a number of people may make each a different guess at the temperature of a room, that, therefore, the room has no objective temperature which is independent of the guesses. "The proposition that values are accepted *a priori* holds good, even if all appraisements of value should be purely subjective and arbitrary." Herein lies the basis of Professor Hartmann's answer to the modern "new-fangled novelties of . . . impulsivism, subjectivism and ethical relativism" which, refusing to recognise any good outside the individual, substitute psychology for ethics.

Professor Hartmann's theory is applied in turn to all the traditional subjects of ethical discussion, egoism and altruism, the conception of sin, the idea of "ought," utilitarianism, the concepts of purpose, freedom and personality. The discussion throughout is subtle and acute ; there is, for example, a penetrating account of the ethical *malaise* of "the modern man," who seems to be even more modern in Germany than he is in England—but in places it is exceedingly difficult. Particularly abstruse is the discussion of the relation of morals to religion. Professor Hartmann's position seems to be that each value is autonomous and independent. The lower values are, indeed, independent in a sense in which the higher are not, since the higher depend upon the lower, whereas the lower do not entail the higher. There is, therefore, no necessary way from goodness to God ; a man may be good without loving God ; indeed, moral action, which is pursued not for its own sake but for the love of God, is divested of the value which is claimed for it. God may, it is conceded, exist ; if He does, we "know nothing about His nature," but the argument entitles us to infer that an all-embracing entity standing at the head of the scale of values, if such there be, "is not the highest and absolute person, but the absolutely impersonal being."

The detailed discussion of the various moral virtues, which occupies Volume II, contains two distinctive features. First, the actualisation in the world of experience (as opposed to the world of value) of the higher values is conditioned by the prior actualisation of the lower. We can, it seems, become good only by stages, and there is an ordered and inevitable progression from lower virtues to higher. Secondly, the appropriate moral reaction to a particular situation always involves one or more often conflicting virtues. It is never courage alone that is required, or honesty, or loyalty, but a synthesis of these and other virtues.

Professor Hartmann's work is a serious and important contribution to ethical theory ; how important, it is as yet too early to say. Judging by the first two volumes—a third is to come dealing with the subject of moral freedom—there need, I think, be little hesitation in endorsing the high claims made by Professor Muirhead and Dr. Stanton Coit for the work as a whole. It has provided one reader at least with more material for thought, and, he hopes, for new thought, than any book on ethics that has been published since the war.

Professor Urban's book is also a contribution to ethical Axiology, which aims at providing an introductory course for students. Particular stress is laid upon practical application, by which Professor Urban means not so much the ability of ethics to make the student virtuous, as to give him "clear working conceptions with which he may approach the vexed questions of our present social and economic life." The book is good and sensible, and, as I have already hinted, it belongs to the same school of thought as Professor Hartmann's. But compared with that it is slight and unoriginal.

C. E. M. Joad.

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A Fire of Driftwood. By D. K. Broster. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

Six of these thirteen stories in *A Fire of Driftwood* have an historical background, and the remainder a supernatural. Miss Broster seems most at home with the stories in the first section, which are concerned with the periods of the French Revolution and of the Napoleonic Wars. These indeed are admirable. They demonstrate vividly how the history of a nation consists in the collective actions of individuals. The setting of the stories, the plot and the characters, are interdependent and are welded together with great skill. "The Admiral's Little Letty," perhaps, gives the best picture of a period, though it is delightful in itself as a story. "The Aristocrat" has a grim humour and "The Laurel of the Race" has in Sainte-Anne one of the finest and most memorable characters in the book. The supernatural stories are not so successful. In some of them, and notably in "The Crib" and "All Souls' Day," several of the persons introduced have little or no bearing on the plot, and in "The Crib" especially there seems to be no central point or real conclusion to the story. However, in spite of this, there is much in *A Fire of Driftwood* which should not on any account be missed, and in "Clairvoyance," at least, Miss Broster has succeeded in reaching a high pitch of horror without sacrificing anything of credibility.

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The authors of this novel, which is of the "thriller" variety, went to Russia together last year, visiting Leningrad, Moscow and the Ukraine, tramping through the high Caucasus, and flying over 3,000 miles in Bolshevik aeroplanes. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the book is a courageous and, on the whole, successful attempt to impart information in fiction form, and if at times the sugar coating of invention wears a little thin on the pill of instruction, at other times the plot becomes so exciting that the reader forgets that he has learned a lot of useful facts. There is perhaps a slight danger of confusing the coating with the pill, and this would be a pity, as the plot dramatises the worst fears about Russia to which Tory alarmists are a prey. *Red Rainbow*, indeed, shows not only a portion of Bolshevik Russia as it is to-day, but also as it might be if Stalin decided to attack India and capture Suez, and the climax of the story comes with the blowing up of a bridge, constructed by American engineers, just before the first troop train is expected. On the whole, the authors have struck a pleasantly unusual balance between realism and romance, and their book deserves a wider circulation than that of the ordinary spy novel.

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